Problems of COMMUNISM

The Future Communist Society

A Symposium

The Soviet Worker

A Discussion

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THE SOVIET UNION

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EN ROUTE TO UTOPIA:

A Progress Report

EDITORS' NOTE: Almost a quarter century after Stalin proclaimed the establishment of socialism in Russia, Soviet society is now officially accomplishing the transition to the "highest stage of social progress." "Communism," announced Nikita Khrushchev to his people last year, "is no longer a remote dream but our near tomorrow." To depict this dream, to gauge the chances of its realization, and to analyze the means by which utopia is to be translated into reality is the purpose of the group of articles featured in this section. Mr. Sukiennicki contributes an outline of the historical development of Communist eschatology, Mr. Goldhagen an interpretive statement of the current version of the myth and its function in Soviet political life. Mr. Ritvo discusses the political instrumentalities of the "transition" process—the roles of the state, the party and the new "public organizations." Finally, Mr. Turpin writes on the economic conditions of progress toward communism in the USSR and suggests a theory of long-run Soviet consumer goods policy. The readers' attention is also called to Robert Tucker's "Blueprint for the Future?" in the Book Review section and to the discussion of Soviet sports by Henry Morton in the Notes and Views section; both these contributions deal with further aspects of the Soviet leaders' current quest for utopia.

The Vision of Communism—Marx to Khrushchev

By Wiktor Sukiennicki

IN THE MIND of the average man, communism as a theory—as distinct from communism in practice—is usually identified as a blueprint for an egalitarian society based on the abolishment of private property. This indeed is the ideal which all Communist theoreticians have proclaimed as their ultimate goal. Stalin, in his role as "theoretician," espoused this goal no less than his predecessors; yet in speaking of socialist society he made the following unusual remark (in a speech at the 17th Party Congress in January 1934):

Every Leninist knows (that is, if he is a real Leninist) that equality in the sphere of requirements and individual life is a piece of reactionary petty bourgeois absurdity, worthy of a primitive sect of ascetics, but not of a Socialist society organized on Marxian lines.[1]

Whatever of a contradictory nature Stalin said elsewhere, he touched on an interesting point here, and in a way he was right Modern Marxian communism differs radically from the communism of the past—

Before World War II, Mr. Sukiennicki was Professor of Theory and Philosophy of Law at the University of Wilno, Poland. In recent years, he has been leading an active academic and journalistic life in Western Europe, lecturing and publishing numerous studies on Communist theory and practice.

[1] J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1947 edition, p. 502.

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whether it be the notions embodied in Plato's ideal republic or the practices adopted in the Essenian and early Christian communes, in some of the religious orders of the Middle Ages, or in the settlements established by adherents of utopian socialism in the New World. What was common to all of these earlier ideas and experiments was the belief that the Communist way of life involved a renunciation not only of private property but of all material luxuries, that it was a morally superior existence, but that it was attainable only by the chosen few.

By contrast, Marx and his followers envisioned a universal communism, characterized not by asceticism but by material plenty; their insistence that such a society would come about was predicated not on ethical religious assumptions, but on their belief in what they called "historical necessity." A true child of his epoch with its confident faith in the omnipotence of the scientific mind, Marx assumed that he had discovered the ultimate principle of the development of human societies, the "law" of their evolution. Under the influence of the rapid industrial revolution of his time, he skillfully recast the theories of Hegel and Ricardo to arrive at the conclusion that the future establishment of a worldwide Communist society was historically inevitable.

The first outline of this theory was formulated jointly by Marx and Engels in 1848, in the famous *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Incisive and picturesque in its language, the *Manifesto* begins with the declaration: "A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of Communism. All the Powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: Pope and Tsar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies. . . ." The opening chapter concludes on the note that the "fall" of the bourgeoisie (or "old Europe") and "the victory of the proletariat" are "equally inevitable." [2]

Eleven years later, in the "Author's Preface" to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*,[3] in a style less flowery and more precise, Marx related how he and Engels arrived at their basic concepts independently of each other in the middle of the 1840's; he then went on to list their conclusions, which "once reached, continued to serve as the leading thread" in their studies. From this most authoritative summary of the basic principles of Marxian doctrine, it is obvious that the founders attached much more importance to the objective progress of technology ("material powers of production") and of economics ("sum total of relations of production") than to the subjective desire and free will of human beings. The relations of production, Marx categorically affirmed, are the indispensable determinants of social and economic development, and are independent of the producers' will. The creative power of human imagination and inventiveness is not unlimited. "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence [that] determines their consciousness." At the base of all civilizations lay historically determined technical inventions, material forces of production, which with time have become more powerful and efficient.

Strongly impressed by the efficiency and productivity of factories using steam-power—a new development in his time—Marx was inclined to think that from the technical point of view, progress leading to a continuous increase in efficiency of material productive forces was unlimited. However, he foresaw practical obstacles of a social nature. Since material productive forces were privately owned, an excess over certain limits of production would not be in their owners' interest. The owners would prefer to produce less and sell at higher prices, rather than to produce more and sell cheaply. Thus, they would create artificial barriers to limit production. In his summary Marx wrote:

At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come into conflict with the existing . . . property relations within which they had been at work before. From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters. Then comes the period of social revolution. . . .[4]

Marx believed that after this revolution and the abolition of private property, nothing would hinder the free development of all material forces of production and of their almost unlimited efficiency and productivity. As a result, in a short time there would be an abundance of all commodities, of all kinds of material riches. The established limits on the distribution of goods according to their value in money or labor would be dropped, and everybody would be able to possess anything he wished. In short, the communism of the future would be not an ascetic communism in renunciation of all worldly riches, but a communism of universal prosperity.

The When and Where of Revolution

When in November 1847 "The Communist League," an obscure international group of revolutionaries, commissioned Marx and Engels to draw up a detailed party

[2] Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1952 edition, as republished in the US House of Representatives Report No. 2240, Washington, D.C., 1956.

[3] K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, translated from the 2nd German edition by N. I. Stone, Chicago, 1904, pp. 11-12.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

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program (later the *Manifesto*), Engels wrote his first draft in the form of a question-and-answer "catechism" called *Principles of Communism*.[5] After describing the advantages of a society without private property, Engels posed the problem why this perfect society had not been established at an earlier time. In his answer he was entirely consistent with his (and Marx's) "leading thread": the forms of human societies and of social institutions do not depend on arbitrary "free will" but on the development of the "material forces of production." In "the earliest stage of development of big industry, private property was the only possible property form; the social order based on it was the only possible social order." Without private property, Engels thought, the tremendous technical progress of the industrial revolution would not have taken place, and there would be none of the prodigious efficiency and productivity of modern industry as he knew it. He wrote in his draft program:

So long as it is not possible to produce so much that there is enough for all, with more left over for expanding the social capital and extending the forces of production—so long as this is not possible, there must always be a ruling class directing the use of society's productive forces, and a poor, oppressed class. How these classes are constituted depends on the stage of development.

Only when private property should exhaust all its creative and progressive capacities and become a hindrance to further development of productive forces, could it and should it be abolished. This opinion of Engels in 1847 was fully corroborated by Marx, who wrote in 1859:

No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed; and new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society.[6]

Marx and Engels believed that this stage had been reached in the most advanced countries of Western Europe and America. But, the revolution would not take place in one country alone. Engels wrote:

. . . the Communist revolution will be not merely a national phenomenon but must take place simultaneously in all civilized countries, that is to say, at least in England, America, France and Germany. It will develop in each of these countries more or less rapidly according as one country or the other has a more developed industry, greater wealth, a more significant mass of productive forces. . . . It will have a powerful impact on the other countries of the world and will radically alter the course of development which they have followed up to now, while greatly stepping up its pace. It is a universal revolution and will accordingly have a universal range.[7]

Engels did not hold, however, that in the countries which were most ready for communism, private property could be abolished "at one stroke." Even in England, then the richest country, the existing productive forces were not sufficient for the creation of a communal society. "In all probability," he wrote, "the proletarian revolution will transform existing society gradually and will be able to abolish private property only when the means of production are available in sufficient quantity."[8]

Attributes of the Future Society

The main aim of the revolution was conceived, then, as the removal of obstacles to the expansion of productive forces. Revolution was "inevitable" at the point when private property "turned into fetters" obstructing the further development of such forces. The *Manifesto* stated:

The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the state . . . and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible.[9]

These steps would lead in short order to the envisioned abundance of material goods and riches, always stressed as the primordial goal of the postrevolutionary society.

Marx and Engels held that after the revolution, an industry run by the state—not for the sake of profit but with the aim of satisfying the needs of all members of the society—would not have to fear crises resulting from overproduction, human needs being practically unlimited. In developing this idea they forwarded the notion that "in bourgeois society, living labor is but a means to increase accumulated labor," whereas "in Communist society, accumulated labor is but a means to widen, to enrich, to promote the existence of the laborer."[10] As Engels further elaborated in his *Principles of Communism:*

Instead of generating misery, overproduction will reach beyond the elementary requirements of society to assure the satisfaction of the needs of all; it will create new needs and at the same time the means of satisfying them. It

[5] F. Engels, *Principles of Communism;* quotations from a translation by Paul M. Sweezy, *Monthly Review* Pamphlet Series No. 4, New York, 1952, p. 13.
[6] *A Contribution . . .* p. 12.
[7] *Principles of Communism,* p. 16.
[8] *Ibid.,* p. 14.
[9] *Loc. cit.,* p. 63.
[10] *Ibid.,* p. 59.

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will become the condition of and stimulus to new progress. . . .

Engels went on in the *Principles* to enumerate other expected consequences of the abolition of property:

Big industry, freed from the pressure of private property, will undergo such an expansion that what we now see will seem as petty in comparison as manufacture seems when put beside the big industry of our own day. . . .

The same [expansion as in industry] will be true of agriculture, which also suffers from the pressure of private property and is held back by the division of privately-owned land into small parcels. Here existing improvements and scientific procedures will be put into practice, with a resulting leap forward which will assure to society all the products it needs. . . .

The division of society into different, mutually hostile, classes will then become unnecessary. . . . The existence of classes originated in the division of labor, and the division of labor as it has been known up to the present will completely disappear.

Just as the peasants and manufacturing workers of the last century changed their whole way of life and became quite different people when they were impressed into big industry, in the same way communal control over production . . . and [its] resulting development will . . . require an entirely different kind of human material. . . . Industry controlled by society as a whole and operated according to a plan presupposes well-rounded human beings, their faculties developed in balanced fashion, able to see the system of production in its entirety.

Education will enable young people quickly to familiarize themselves with the whole system of production and to pass from one branch of production to another in response to the needs of society or their own inclinations. . . . Communist society will in this way make it possible for its members to put their comprehensively developed faculties to full use.[11]

Incentive and Distribution Problems

In the final version of the *Manifesto* Marx and Engels did not go into any detail on the subject of labor incentives in postrevolutionary society. The conscripted labor force they envisioned—note their references to "equal liability of all to labor," "establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture," "combination of education with industrial production, *etc., etc.,*"[12] —obviously was inadequate of itself to effect the vast increase in production and productivity envisioned.

It seems apparent from his preliminary draft of the *Manifesto* that Engels had thought it would be possible to maintain the old prerevolutionary incentives to labor for a considerable time after the revolution. He argued the probability of a gradual transformation of the existing society to the point when "private property will disappear of its own accord, money will become superfluous, and production will so expand and man so change that society will be able to slough off whatever of its old economic habits may remain." [13] Since the final joint version of the *Manifesto* omits any mention of the persistence of "old economic habits," it seems fair to assume that Marx did not at the time share the opinion of Engels. Yet some 27 years later, Marx himself was forced to reach the same conclusion.

When, in 1875, Marx received the new program of the German Social Democratic Party, he found it influenced by the theories of his rival, Lassalle. Among other practical demands, the program claimed for the workers their full share of the product of their labor and an "equitable distribution" of all goods and commodities. His criticism of this Lassallean demand led Marx to the formulation of a new theory proclaiming that two different phases of communism would succeed the proletarian revolution.[14] In the later and "higher" of these phases—when all the "main consequences of the abolition of private property" described heretofore had become a reality, when the expanded forces of production had actually produced an abundance of all goods, and when, as a result, men themselves had radically changed—the problem of "equitable distribution" would become practically nonexistent: every member of society would have as much as he needed. However, in the lower phase, before all this was achieved, before labor had "become not merely a means to live but . . . in itself the first necessity of living," some of the "old economic habits" would remain. Among such practices, the goods still in scarcity would continue to be distributed according to the amount of work performed by each of the society's members.

Marx bitterly criticized this "right of the producers" to receive rewards "proportional to the amount of labor they contributed" as "still continually handicapped by bourgeois limitations." He wrote:

. . . . one man will excel another physically or intellectually and so can contribute in the same time more labor, or can labor for a longer time. . . . This . . . tacitly recognizes unequal individual endowments, and thus capacities for production, as natural privileges. . . . Further, one worker is married, another single, one has more children than another and so on. Given an equal capacity for labor and

[11] *Loc. cit.*, pp. 16-18.
[12] *Loc. cit.*, p. 63.
[13] *Principles of Communism*, p. 15.
[14] *Critique of the Gotha Program*, International Publishers, New York, 1933 edition. Quotations which follow are from pp. 29-31.

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hence an equal share in the funds for social consumption, the one will in practice receive more than the other, the one will be richer than the other and so forth.

While condemning these inequities, Marx judged them to be "unavoidable in the first phase of Communist society when it is just emerging after prolonged birth pangs from capitalistic society," and thus is "in every respect tainted economically, morally, and intellectually with the hereditary diseases of the old society from whose womb it is emerging."

Marx's analysis in the *Critique of the Gotha Program* was pushed further by Engels in his articles against Dühring, written in 1877-78. According to Engels, "the proletarian demand for equality"—as opposed to the bourgeois demand for "civil equality"—was in its "real content" a "demand for the *abolition of classes,*" and "any demand for equality which goes beyond this of necessity passes into absurdity."[15]

These trends in Marx's and Engels' thinking were to provide Stalin, some 55 years later, with a theoretical basis for an expedient conclusion: complete equality being impossible even after the revolution and the abolition of classes, differentiation in the distribution of still scarce goods could serve in the lower phase of communism as an incentive to more and better work, since the workers—still "in every respect tainted . . . with the hereditary diseases of the old society"—would be inclined to do their best to get more for themselves than their neighbors got.

Leninist Refinements

Before the revolution Lenin was in complete agreement with the above theories and opinions of Marx and Engels. In fact, one of his major works, *State and Revolution,* written on the eve of the October Revolution in 1917, was composed in main part of quotations from Marx and Engels with relatively few comments by Lenin himself. In dealing with "the transition from capitalism to communism," and the two phases of Communist society, he relied in particular on the fundamental concepts of Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program.*

Lenin did, however, append some conclusions of his own. Thus, in commenting on Marx's view of the practical necessity of retaining, during the first phase of communism, "the narrow horizon of bourgeois right" in the distribution of consumer goods, Lenin also asserted the inevitability of preserving "the bourgeois state," justifying his view on the ground that "right is nothing without an apparatus capable of *enforcing* the observance of the standards of right." [16]

It is significant, moreover, that Lenin paid less attention to the problem of expanding productive forces to achieve an abundance of goods as fast as possible—considered by Marx and Engels the most important aim of the postrevolutionary period—than to the secondary problem of distributing existing goods. The solution to the latter, in Lenin's opinion, was relatively simple. He wrote:

Accounting and control—that is the *main* thing required for the "setting up" and correct functioning of the *first phase* of Communist society. All citizens are transformed into salaried employees of the state, which consists of the armed workers. . . . All that is required is that they should work equally—do their proper share of work—and get paid equally. . . .

Envisioning society in the first stage of communism as "a single office and a single factory, with equality of labor and equality of pay," he stressed that this "factory" discipline "is by no means our ideal, or our ultimate goal." He considered it "but a necessary *step,*" not for developing productive forces to their full capacity, but for training all members of society to administer social production independently, keeping local accounts and exercising control over idlers. He held that with such practices, "very soon the *necessity* of observing the simple, fundamental rules of human intercourse will become a *habit,*" and then "the door will be wide open for the transition from the first phase of Communist society to its higher phase, and with it to the complete withering away of the State."[17]

A Changing View of Russia

A pivotal issue underlying the entire range of post-revolutionary shifts in Communist doctrine is the fact that the revolution took place in Russia and remained isolated there. It is interesting in this connection that Marx's and Engels' viewpoints on the necessary locus and conditions for revolution changed somewhat during their lifetime. In the *Manifesto* Marx and Engels had named the Pope and the Tsar as the main pillars of "old Europe" and had depicted Russia as the bulwark of reaction on the continent.[18] It was indeed due to the intervention of Tsar Nicholas I that the 1848 revolution was crushed in Hungary and as a consequence was stifled throughout the whole of Europe. A few decades

[15] *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science. Anti-Dühring,* Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1947 edition, p. 159. Engels' emphasis.

[16] V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works,* Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, Volume II, p 208. Lenin's emphasis.

[17] *Ibid.,* p. 210-11. Lenin's emphases.

[18] *Loc. cit.,* p. 49 and cf. p. 37.

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later, however, Russian revolutionaries attracted international attention by their assassination of Nicholas' successor, and talk of the Russian revolutionary movement became a high fashion in Europe. These developments induced Marx and Engels to alter their thinking on Russia. In January 1882 they wrote in the preface to a new Russian translation of the *Manifesto:*

During the Revolution of 1848-49 . . . the tsar was proclaimed the chief of European reaction. Today he is a prisoner-of-war of the revolution in Gatchina, and Russia forms the vanguard of revolutionary action in Europe.

Further in the preface, they touched briefly on the subject of the Russian *obshchina,* at the time a widespread form of communal landholding, and came to the conclusion:

If the Russian Revolution becomes the signal for a proletarian revolution in the West, so that both complement each other, the present Russian common ownership of land may serve as the starting point for a Communist development.[19]

During the next three decades, however, the role of the *obshchina* in the rural economy dwindled considerably, as Russia belatedly embarked on a course of capitalist development. There is no doubt Lenin and his revolutionist cohorts considered the prospect of a Russian-based socialist revolution with skepticism. In April 1914 he expressed in no uncertain terms the view that:

Russia is the most petty-bourgeois, the most philistine of the capitalist countries, and only now is passing through that epoch of the bourgeois revolutions which, for example, for England were characteristic in the 17th century, and for France in the 18th and first half of the 19th centuries.[20]

Yet, in the expectation that a proletarian revolution in Russia would spark a continental conflagration, Lenin just three and a half years later abandoned his laborious exegesis of Marx's and Engels' texts to form the Bolshevik revolutionary government, remarking at the time: "It is more pleasant and useful to go through the 'experience of the revolution' than to write about it." [21]

At first Lenin's regime tried to rule according to theoretical Marxian principles. Decrees issued in November and December 1917 conformed strictly with the concepts of government laid down in *State and Revolution.*[22] Very soon, however, Lenin realized that "accounting and control" were hardly sufficient to ensure a "correct functioning" of revolutionary Russia. Much more crucial for his future course was, of course, the fact that the "signals" for a proletarian revolution in the West went unanswered.

Lenin seemingly never gave up hope that the international revolution would materialize. What he really thought about the possibilities of developing full socialism and communism in Russia alone is a complex question which need not be gone into here, though it might be useful to quote some remarks from an article he dictated in March 1923, the last before his death:

The general feature of our present social life is the following: we have destroyed capitalist industry and have tried to raze to the ground the medieval institution of landlordism. . . . It is not easy, however, to hold on until the Socialist revolution is victorious in the more developed countries. . . . We, too, lack sufficient civilization to enable us to pass straight on to socialism, although we have the political requisites for it.[23]

The Role of Human Forces

In any event, it is clear that Lenin had no thought of abandoning the pursuit of socialism in Russia while waiting for the "world" revolution. The "material forces of production," vital in Marx's and Engels' concepts, were lacking, so Lenin had to look for a substitute. He found it in "human forces"—in the alleged will, determination and heroism of the masses.

In the spring of 1919, after a very difficult winter, a campaign was launched to inspire the citizens of Moscow to volunteer extra days of unpaid work [termed *"subbotniks,"* after Saturday] restoring order to the railway yards, factories and streets of the capital. In answer to the regime's appeal thousands of laborers, together with party dignitaries and white collar workers, cleaned away the accumulated debris, working in most cases with their bare hands. Lenin, who himself lent a hand in the project, called it "A Great Beginning" toward the truly Socialist-Communist attitude toward work. Invoking this slogan as the title of an article, he wrote:

The unskilled laborers and railway workers of Moscow . . . are living in desperately hard conditions . . . they are actually starving. And yet [they] work overtime *without any pay,* and achieve *an enormous increase in productivity of labor* in spite of the fact that they are weary, tormented, exhausted by starvation. Is this not the beginning of a change of world-historic significance? . . . Communism begins when the *rank-and-file workers* begin to display self-sacrificing concern that overcomes all obstacles . . .[24]

[19] *Loc. cit.,* pp. 37-38.
[20] *Sochineniia* (Works), 4th Russian edition, Vol. 20, Moscow, 1948, p. 230.
[21] *Selected Works,* Vol. II, p. 225.
[22] See *Dekrety sovetskoi vlasti* (Decrees of the Soviet Government), Vol. I (October 25, 1917 - March 16, 1919), Moscow, 1957.
[23] *Selected Works,* Vol. II, pp. 852-53.
[24] *Ibid.,* pp. 496-97. Lenin's emphases.

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During 1919-20, Lenin often returned to the same theme, stressing that "labor performed without expectation of reward," out of a habit of working for the common good or even "as the requirement of a healthy body," is "Communist labor in the narrower and stricter sense of the term." While admitting that Soviet society and the Soviet social system "are still a very long way from the application of this form of labor on a broad, really mass scale," he affirmed that "the construction of economic life on *the new basis* can only start from *little things*"—from *"subbotniks,* labor armies, labor service." [25]

Thus Lenin, more or less consciously, and acting under the pressure of the economic situation in post-revolutionary Russia, completely abandoned "the leading thread" of all Marxian reasoning. He reversed the basic thesis that "it is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence [that] determines their consciousness." In other words, he disregarded the categorical tenet of Marx and Engels that the forms of human societies and of social institutions depend not on the arbitrary "free will" of men but on the development of the material forces of production.

Determinism *vs.* Determination

The basic shift in theoretical assumptions engendered by the need to rely on "human forces" can be noted at the simplest level in the changes which Lenin—and Stalin after him—rendered in the Marxist vocabulary. Whereas Marx and Engels usually spoke of the socialist society's "developing" or "rising," the Soviet leaders emphasized "destroying" the old order and "building up" the new. Marx and Engels had pictured an inexorable "historical process" by which the social order "developed" of itself through a series of stages, the productive forces and derivative social forms of one stage emerging in inevitable revolution from the "womb" of the previous stage. Lenin's and Stalin's doctrinal innovations stressed the idea that a "new (better) order" had to be "created," consciously and according to plan, on a "new ground" and on new foundations. The essence of this difference was succinctly expressed by Lenin in his noted speech on "The Tasks of the Youth Leagues" of October 1920:

In many respects the first half of the work has been done. The old order has been destroyed, as it deserved to be; it has been transformed into a heap of ruins, as it deserved to be. The ground has been cleared, and on this ground the young Communist generation must build a Communist society.[26]

Lenin supposed in short that the selfless dedication and disciplined labor of the masses would overcome all obstacles and would build up the edifice of socialism and then communism on the bare soil of starving Russia. This approach is basically paralleled today in the Chinese Communists' notion of the "great leap forward."

That the Leninist interpretation constituted an essential departure from Marxism has never been admitted by the Communist leadership. The question has been consistently begged—as, for instance, in Stalin's interview with the first American labor delegation to Russia on September 9, 1927.[27] The first question put to him was:

What new principles have Lenin and the Communist Party added to Marxism in practice? Would it be correct to say that Lenin believed in "creative revolutions" whereas Marx was more inclined to wait for the culmination of economic forces?

Stalin pretended not to understand the question, or at least dodged its implications in an artfully prolix reply. To the first part of it, he answered that Lenin had "added . . . no 'new principles' to Marxism nor did Lenin abolish any of the 'old' principles of Marxism." He went on: "Lenin always was and remained a loyal and consistent pupil of Marx and Engels, and wholly and entirely based himself on the principles of Marxism." On the other hand, "Lenin did not merely carry out the doctrines of Marx and Engels. He developed these doctrines further . . . in accordance with the new conditions of development, with the new phase of capitalism, and with imperialism." After enumerating six aspects of theory "in which Lenin contributed something new in developing further the doctrines of Marx," Stalin concluded on the note that "Leninism cannot be separated from Marxism, still less can it be contrasted to Marxism."

Passing to the second part of the question, Stalin declared flatly that "it would be absolutely incorrect to say" that by believing in "creative revolutions" Lenin had differed from Marx. He went on to remark that while the "toy 'rebellions' of one tribe against the other" (as in Albania) might be called "unconstructive," "every popular revolution, if it is really a popular revolution. . . cannot but be constructive." While this was no answer to the question posed, it was a full endorsement of

[25] *Ibid.,* pp. 569-70. Lenin's emphases.

[26] *Ibid.,* p. 666.

[27] J. Stalin, *Leninism,* International Publishers, New York, 1933, Vol. 2. Quotations which follow from pp. 43-48.

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Lenin's precept of building socialism in backward Russia with the tools of human will (consciousness) and determination.

Living Labor and Accumulated Labor

In the Leninist view, as propounded by Stalin, this "building" of socialism was to be not only conscious, but also rational and even "scientific." It was to proceed according to a plan carefully prepared in advance. Conforming to the plan, "new works and factories on a new technical basis" would be built; and agriculture supplied "with a maximum of agricultural machinery" would be developed; "a distributive apparatus between town and country" would be organized.[28]

In short, the first aim was to accomplish what had already been achieved in the industrialized countries, only more quickly and more efficiently than under capitalism. Once this level was reached, it was held, society would proceed to develop according to the roseate predictions of Marx and Engels, producing the envisioned "overabundance" of goods, erasing class differences, reshaping human attitudes, etc. Thus, Lenin and Stalin could honestly (in their opinion) affirm that they did not alter the Marxist doctrine at all, that they only adapted it to the conditions of their underdeveloped country. Since large-scale industry and capital were virtually non-existent, the leadership had to build them up as quickly as possible with the aid of what it had at its disposal—human resources. Until the "new technical basis" of production could be achieved, living labor would have to remain primarily "a means to increase accumulated labor."

When the First Five-Year Plan was launched in the spring of 1929, Communist Party propaganda succeeded to some extent in promoting the myth of its miraculous consequences-to-be. At the time many people genuinely believed that life in the Soviet Union would become easier and gayer after the fulfillment of the plan. With their thoughts directed to the "bright future," they at first endured privations and worked with zeal.

However, as in the decline of Lenin's "Great Beginning" after the first few years of the revolution, enthusiasm was not long in waning. As early as February 1931, Stalin felt the pressure of popular demand "to slow the tempo a bit, to put a check on the movement," as he put it. His rejection was emphatic:

No comrades, it is not possible! The tempo must not be reduced! On the contrary, we must increase it as much as is within our powers and possibilities. . . . We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. . . . In ten years at most we must make good the distance we are lagging behind the advanced capitalist countries.[29]

The tempo was not reduced; one five-year period followed another, but the goal of "catching up and surpassing" the West still was not reached. Since the major part of the national income was used to promote heavy industry, consumer goods remained pitifully scarce—while the regime went right on paying lip service to its proclaimed intention of satisfying all the needs of all the members of society.

In the *Manifesto,* the wresting of capital from private owners and its centralization in the hands of the state was conceived as the means to achieve an increase of general welfare. In Soviet Russia the means became the end in itself. "The complete liquidation of capitalist elements . . . and the elimination of the remnants of capitalism in the economy" were proclaimed as "basic political tasks of the second Five-Year plan."[30] Seemingly, these tasks were quickly dispatched: in November 1936, Stalin announced "the complete victory of the socialist system in all spheres of the national economy," and drew the conclusion that "in the main, we have already achieved the first phase of communism—socialism."[31]

The Carrot and the Stick

To the above declaration Stalin appended the statement: "The fundamental principle of this [first] phase of communism is, as you know, the formula: 'From each according to his abilities, to each according to his work.' " This formula, a far cry from Lenin's theoretical postulate that in the first phase all citizens would "work equally—do their proper share of work—and get paid equally," nonetheless was a pragmatic reflection of the prevailing trend of Stalinist policy. From about 1934 on Stalin openly abandoned the equalitarian ideal and pursued instead a course of radical social and economic differentiation. Not only extreme income differentials but various symbols of distinction—titles, orders, medals, *etc.,* accompanied by material and other privileges—were instituted. Apparently lacking faith in the mere enthusiasm and heroism of Soviet comrades, Stalin skillfully resorted to material advantages and prestige as incentives to evoke more effective and

[28] *Ibid.,* p. 93.

[29] *Problems of Leninism,* pp. 355-57.

[30] See resolution of the 17th Party Conference, February 1932, reiterated at the 17th Party Congress February 1934; in *KPSS v rezoliutsiiakh i reshcniiakh sezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK* (The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and CC Plenums), 7th ed., Moscow, 1954, Part 3, pp. 150 and 203.

[31] *Problems of Leninism,* p. 548.

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productive labor. Scarce goods and commodities, inaccessible to ordinary citizens, were made available in abundance to ranking members of the hierarchy as well as to Stakhanovite workers who distinguished themselves by productive contributions. In effect "the narrow bourgeois horizon of right" of access to consumer goods was not only preserved but constricted far more than in the "capitalist" societies.

Mere economic and social incentives were deemed insufficient, however, to drive the wide mass of citizens to the limit of their abilities, so Stalin used the stick as well as the carrot. Although he did not dare to refute formally the doctrine of Marx, Engels, and Lenin assuring the future "withering away" of the state, he "developed it further" and gave it his own "dialectical" interpretation. As early as June 1930, at the 16th Party Congress, he declared:

We are in favor of the State dying out, and at the same time we stand for the strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which represents the most powerful and mighty authority of all forms of State that have existed up to the present day. The highest possible development of the power of the State, with the objective of preparing the conditions for the dying out of the State: that is the Marxist formula.[32]

Under cover of this rationalization Stalin built up the state power of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" under his own strict control, using it to terrorize the society and to demand maximum exertion from the citizens, from each "according to his abilities."

Stalin's Legacy

Some twenty years of the ruthless application of coercive methods were not without results. In a reversal of the original concept that communism would result as "an effect of big industry and of its satellites" (Engels' terminology in 1847),[33] it is Soviet Russian "communism"—or the Stalinist totalitarian state—that has produced large-scale industry in the USSR. The industrialization drive has emphasized the production of capital goods and armaments, while consumer goods have remained and still remain in short supply. Nevertheless, as early as March 1939, at the 18th Party Congress, and again at the 19th Congress in October 1952, it was officially proclaimed that the "building" of socialism had been completed, and that the USSR had entered the higher phase of constructing communism.[34]

After Stalin's death a number of his theories and practices were officially condemned, particularly in pronouncements at the 20th Party Congress in 1956. However, his (and Lenin's) fundamental thesis, asserting the possibility of building a technical and economic basis for the future Communist society by means of conscious, planned action, was not only retained but fully reaffirmed at the 21st Party Congress in January 1959.

According to declarations of the 21st Congress, the Soviet Union is now on the threshold of full communism. Congress resolutions on the development of the Soviet economy provide for the construction of the material-technical basis of communism by 1975 (a "decisive step" toward this goal is projected for the current Seven-Year Plan).[35] Thus, despite the tremendous industrial, scientific and military advances already made, the Soviet regime plans for at least the next fifteen years to continue directing its main effort toward the development of heavy industry, and only secondarily toward the satisfaction of consumer needs. "Living labor" must continue to serve as a means to increase "accumulated labor," rather than "accumulated labor" being used to improve the lot of the living laborer. Soviet citizens must wait yet another interim before they can expect a decent supply—let alone the healthy "overproduction" envisioned by Marx and Engels—of the consumer goods they need.

To repeat a statement of Engels quoted earlier:

So long as it is not possible to produce so much that there is enough for all, with more left over for expanding social capital and extending the forces of production—so long as this is not possible, there must always be a ruling class directing the use of society's productive forces, and a poor, oppressed class.

Engels in effect provided an advance description of Soviet society. The Soviet ruling class, "directing the use of society's productive forces," continues to concentrate on the expansion of heavy industrial and military capacity. The rest of society, under a system based on subservience, remains essentially oppressed and certainly impoverished.

Yet at least, in contrast to Stalin's day when the "oppressed class" was not heard from at all, the ordinary Soviet citizen has in recent years found it a little easier to voice his mind on occasion. Generally, published criticism is confined to local problems, but in rare instances the Soviet press has revealed strains of popular sentiment on basic issues. Thus, in line with what has

[32] *Leninism*, Vol. 2, p. 402.

[33] Marx and Engels, *Sochineniia* (Works), 2nd Russian ed., Moscow, 1955, Vol. 4, p. 281.

[34] See *KPSS v rezoliutsiiakh* . . . , Part 3, pp. 340 and 579.

[35] See A. A. Zvorikin, "Materialno-tekhnicheskaia baza kommunizma" (The Material-technical Basis of Communism), *Voprosi filosofii* (Moscow), No. 5, 1960, pp. 26-40.

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been said, a fitting conclusion to this article is provided by an excerpt from an unusual letter, published in company with a severe rebuke to the writer, in the leading Soviet youth paper, *Komsomolskaia pravda,* on June 11, 1960:

Respected Editor:

. . . So our scientists launched a rocket to the moon. I will not argue over whether it really got there. On the moon, so on the moon. An event certainly important, and there is much noise about it. . . .

Do you think this preoccupation with sputniks and the cosmos in general is timely or . . . perhaps premature? What I mean to say by this is that we still have plenty of terrestrial worries: there is a lack of living quarters; of children's nurseries; commodities are expensive. I have no doubt this rocket cost so much that everybody would be stupefied if they knew the amount.

Say to any laborer: "Look, Ivan, if we did not launch this rocket your Vovik could go to the kindergarten; a yard of cloth would cost not four notes but only one half, and you would be able to buy an electric iron in the store" —and I am sure, he would answer: "For God's sake, do not launch those rockets!"

Rockets, rockets, rockets!—who needs them now! For the time being to hell with the moon; let me put something better on my dinner table instead. Afterwards, certainly, let us play around with the moon.

Whether you will print this or not is your business; I doubt if you will risk it. But I am quite cool towards those sputniks and rockets. Premature. Useless.

Greetings, Alexei N.

The Glorious Future—Realities and Chimeras

By Erich Goldhagen

SUKARNO: *Indonesian socialism is not a severe socialism. It aims at a good life for all, without exploitation.*

KHRUSHCHEV: *No, no, no. Socialism should mean that every minute is calculated, a life built on calculation.*

SUKARNO: *That is the life of a robot.*

—*The New York Times,* March 2, 1960.

THE IDEA OF PROGRESS, the belief in the irresistible advance of human society to ever greater social and moral perfection, which had been, in the words of the distinguished historian, J. B. Bury, "the animating and controlling idea of Western civilization",[1] is virtually extinct in the West today. Two world wars, the eruption of inhumanity and barbarism—all the more terrifying for their technological refinement and the ever-present danger of universal nuclear destruction—have banished the optimism characteristic of the nineteenth century. Gloom, pessimism and uncertainty have enveloped Western civilization. The prophecy of Condorcet that the perfectability of man is in fact unlimited and can never be reversed"[2] could not but evoke a smile in a generation which has witnessed Auschwitz and which is condemned to live in the shadow of the hydrogen bomb.

But the vision of utopia, extinct in the West, continues to shine in the Communist East, deriving its splendor from the artificial illumination of the propaganda engines of Agitprop. At the 12th International Congress of Philosophers held at Venice in 1958, M. B. Mitin, a leading Soviet philosopher, portrayed the future society to which the Soviet Union is allegedly advancing in terms worthy perhaps not so much of Marx as of his more imaginative predecessors—Condorcet, St. Simon and Fourier. The society to come, he solemnly prophesied, would attain such heights of social

[1] See the Preface to J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress,* Macmillan, New York, 1932.

[2] Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau des progrès de l'esprit humain,* Paris, 1883, Volume 1, p. 19.

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perfection that the individuals nurtured by it would develop—"as if by magic"—qualities hitherto possessed only by men of genius. The common man would grow to the stature of Michelangelo, Liszt, or Paganini.[3] Just as communism would abolish the distinction between rich and poor by providing abundance for all, so would it reduce the differences between the mental capacities and achievements of individuals by liberating the potentialities of man from the oppressive shells of human institutions. To the Western philosophers present, it must have seemed as if the ghost of Condorcet had descended upon Venice in the guise of the Soviet philosopher to preach the doctrine of inevitable progress towards utopia. Some might even have reflected that it was odd, though symbolic, that this latter-day Soviet Condorcet combined the lofty vocation of philosophical visionary with the mundane pursuit of police agent and propagandist.[4]

But the theme of utopia is not confined to philosophers alone. In the Soviet Union, economists, writers and a vast army of propagandists have been dwelling on it with increasing frequency, reflecting the guiding and inspiring hand of the party—the chief dispenser of spiritual nourishment to the Soviet populace.

Addressing a plenary session of the Board of the Writers' Union of the RSFSR, L. Sobolev, its chairman and an official guardian of literary orthodoxy, envisaged the future Communist society to be peopled by citizens endowed with intellectual capacities of a degree hitherto confined to a gifted minority. The art of literary creation, instead of remaining the property of a chosen few, will become the natural attribute of everyone. The citizens of communism, released from the toil to which humanity has been condemned, would take to the pen; and a new golden age of art and literature would dawn upon the human race. Just as "work will become the primary vital need of man, so the mastery of [literary] craftsmanship will cease to be the achievement of single individuals to become the natural practice of everyone exactly in the same manner in which, under Soviet rule, literacy ceased to be the privilege of the ruling estate and became universal." Soviet society, Sobolev continued, stands in the "forefield" of that golden age, separated from it only by a road of great but surmountable obstacles. In describing the manner in which these obstacles are to be overcome, Sobolev abandoned the mellow and gilded language of the utopian dreamer for the warlike metaphor of the cavalry officer, his former vocation:

We find ourselves in the forefield of communism. I adduce this military term consciously because, in the course of the unfolding advance which our society is now effecting, we must still overcome some minefields laid thousands of years ago—the so-called survivals of capitalism in the consciousness of people.[5]

Many would be naturally tempted to dismiss such utterances as ritualistic lip service, as mechanical and meaningless recitals of the Marxist creed. But to do so would be to obscure not only the sincere devotion with which many of the Marxist formulas are held, but also the vital role played by utopia in the Communist order.

The Opiate of the Rulers

The secular eschatology of Marxism is one of the ideological and psychological pillars of Soviet society. Just as the power of the church and indeed the cohesion of the medieval order rested on the belief in the hereafter, so the ideal terrestial future is an essential element of the spiritual foundation of the Communist world. The awe-inspiring firmament of the hereafter was a living psychic reality for medieval man, providing

[3] See *Doklady i vystupleniia predstavitelei sovetskoi filosofskoi nauki na XII mezhdunarodnom filosofskom kongresse,* Moscow, 1958. An account of the contributions of Soviet philosophers to the Congress may be found in the *Journal of Philosophy* (New York), No. 6, 1958.

This is strikingly similar to Trotsky's rhapsodic vision with which he concludes his *Literature and Revolution* (Russell & Russell, New York, 1956, p. 256): "Man will become immeasurably stronger, wiser and subtler; his body will become more harmonized, his movements more rhythmic, his voice more musical. The forms of life will become dynamically dramatic. The average human type will rise to the heights of an Aristotle, a Goethe, or a Marx. And above this ridge new peaks will rise." Trotsky, who was disposed by temperament to cherish above all those features of the future society reflecting the rule of reason and order, envisioned that even the process of procreation would be subjected to rational social planning. He was thus one of the very few Marxists who regarded the practice of eugenics under communism as a logical extension of the triumph of purposeful "consciousness" over mere planless "being". "The human race will not have ceased to crawl on all fours before God, kings and capital, in order later to submit humbly before the dark laws of heredity and a blind sexual selection!" (*ibid,* p. 255.) Mr. Isaac Deutscher, the biographer of Trotsky, quotes at length from the concluding pages of Trotsky's book, which are marked by eloquence and boundless utopianism, and comments that "no Marxist writer before or after Trotsky has viewed the great prospect with so realistic [sic] an eye and so flaming an imagination". Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Unarmed,* Oxford University Press, London 1959, p. 197.

[4] Mitin, entrusted by Stalin with the conduct of the campaign against Tito, distinguished himself by such zeal that he earned the Titoist epithet "the best philosopher among the NKVD men and the best NKVD man among philosophers".

[5] *Pravda,* May 11, 1960.

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the anchor chain for the power of the church over his mind. Earthly power was firmly rooted in the heavenly domain, investing the authority of the church with a claim to obedience equaled by few temporal rulers. All political power seeks to legitimize itself, to rely not on naked force but on the voluntary consent of its subjects. But the Bolshevik claim to obedience could rest on few tangible benefits offered to the people. It has demanded much in toil, suffering and anxiety, but it has offered little in return, save the assurance that the privation of the present would yield abundant fruit in the undetermined future. Until recently, utopian dreams were the only gratification the regime could supply in plenty.

It would be impossible to determine the efficacy of utopia as an opium for the people. It is doubtful, for instance, that the peasantry was at all susceptible to it, particularly during the collectivization drive. Terror seems to have been a more potent instrument in securing submission to the will of the party than the blandishments of the glorious future. But if Marx's eschatology has served only imperfectly as an opium for the people, it has been a powerful self-ministered opium for the ruling class. It would be difficult to exaggerate the élan derived by Bolsheviks from the utopian vision. It has endowed them with an unwavering singleness of purpose, with a missionary zeal which retains, undaunted, the fullness of its fervor even in adversity, and it has imparted to them an immunity to scruples in the pursuit of power.

For the Bolshevik mind, from the very beginning, endowed the future with the dimensions and qualities of a Deity—or rather a Moloch. Whenever a Bolshevik has been beset by doubts caused by the contradiction between precept and practice, between the humane goal and the inhuman deed, he would summon up the radiant future, thus rationalizing the present, appeasing his conscience, and enabling himself to resume his vocation undisturbed by qualms. Perhaps the power of rationalization conferred by utopia is best revealed in those Communist victims of the Stalinist terror who, languishing innocently in prisons and concentration camps, nevertheless found comfort and justification for their ordeal in the belief that their lot was but part of the heavy toll which humanity must pay in order to enter the gates of the future. The Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz has brilliantly described the arguments of Communist Theodicy. His expressions of disquiet over the mass deportations from the Baltic were met by a Communist friend, more strongly inured by faith than himself, with reproach:

If you keep thinking about the Baltics and the camps, do you know what will happen to you? . . . You will use up the rest of your time to live and you will present yourself before Zeus; and the god, pointing his finger (here my friend gestured accusingly), will cry: "Idiot! You ruined your life by worrying about trifles!"

Or:

The present moment is dark but, seen from a distance, for example from the year 2953, it will appear as short as the Reign of Terror in the French Revolution seems to us today; and the number of victims (two or three hundred million, more or less) will seem scarcely more important than a few thousand beheaded French aristocrats.[6]

The Bolshevik is one of the purest incarnations of the Faustian Man. He is constantly on the historical road in pursuit of the Goal, overcoming obstacles and warding off enemies. To pause, content with past achievements, would signify that his mission has been completed, his role exhausted, and his claim to total power ended. Totalitarian communism can dispense neither with enemies nor with utopia.[7]

Challenge From Within

During the past three years the theme of the transition to communism has occupied a prominent place in party propaganda. Not since the "heroic days" of the revolution has the shape of the future society been the object of such intense preoccupation. It was the subject of a special session of the departments of social sciences of the USSR Academy of Sciences in June 1958. It was a conspicuous item in Khrushchev's speech to the 21st CPSU Congress. A seminar held in Prague in April 1960, attended by leading economists of all the Communist countries, made this the single point on its agenda. During 1959 and 1960 Soviet presses turned out about 100 books and countless magazine and newspaper articles devoted to the image of the ultimate society.[8] Clearly, the final stage of social evolution has become one of the major preoccupations of theoreticians and propagandists alike.

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[6] Czeslaw Milosz, *The Captive Mind,* Vintage Books, New York, 1959, pp. 213, 225.

[7] The totalitarian regime must constantly affirm a boundless optimism. For pessimism is the blood-brother of skepticism, and skepticism is the enemy of all absolute creeds. It is, in the words of the Soviet Encyclopedia, "one of the forms of the struggle against science and against dialectical materialism." *Bolshaia sovetskaia entsiklopedia,* Volume 39.

[8] For a review of the literature, see A. Loginov, "Chitaia knigu o kommunizme", *Kommunist,* No. 12, 1960, pp. 111-18. Of the many books two deserve to be singled out: D. I. Chesnokov, *Ot gosudarstvennosti k obshchestvennomu samoupravleniiu,* Moscow, 1960, and S. G. Strumilin, *Rabochi den i kommunizm,* Moscow, 1959.

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Three interrelated circumstances seem to have combined to produce the current emphasis on Marxist eschatology: the challenge of libertarian Marxist revisionism; the party's endeavor—in response to the revisionist challenge—to recast its ideology into a mold consistent with the demands of totalitarianism, so as to prevent its use as a weapon of heresy; and finally, the greater clarity which the hitherto blurred picture of the future has assumed in the minds of the Soviet leaders.

Revisionists in Hungary and Poland and Yugoslavia brought to life some of the tenets of Marxism which for years had slumbered peacefully and innocuously in the official text. Phrases like "workers' control", "the withering away of the state", "the leap from necessity to freedom", which had been invoked on ceremonial occasions with automatic solemnity, now became slogans of revolt raised against the terroristic dictatorship. The Soviet leaders were dismayed to see their ritualistic phrases turned into "armed doctrines", challenging the foundations of their power. They were awakened to the fact that their own ideological armory contained two-edged swords. Indeed, one of the lessons derived by the Soviet leaders from the events in Hungary and Poland in 1956 and from the faint intellectual stirrings in their own domain was the power inherent in ideas.[9] True, amidst terror ideas are silent. But the veil of silence conceals a dormant life. When terror relents, or when circumstances prevent its full use, those ideas may spring into insurgent action.

The slogans of revisionism were all the more dangerous to the Communist regime because they appeared, not in the alien and vulnerable garb of bourgeois doctrine, but in the legitimate and familiar attire of Marxism, asserting their purity against the alleged official adulterators of the Marxist creed. In the words of a Soviet writer:

> **The problem of the withering away of the . . . socialist state is the main thesis, indeed a veritable *idée fixe* of contemporary revisionism. No sooner does the question of the state arise than they steer it to the issue of the withering away.**[10]

The need arose to remove heretical overtones from such doctrines by placing upon them an interpretation compatible with the perpetuation of totalitarianism. New wine had to be poured into the old libertarian bottles of Marxism, a wine that would not intoxicate with the desire for freedom but would instill a quiescent submission to an everlasting totalitarian order.

Reality *vs.* Promises

One of the contradictions of communism has always consisted in its demand for absolute obedience and punishment of any sign of resistance to its will, on the one hand, and its simultaneous inculcation, through Marxist texts, of the dream of a different social order, on the other. A populace exposed to the ubiquitous power of the police and the state, experiencing glaring inequalities in income and status, chained serf-like to their jobs, could nevertheless speak aloud about a future state to the fulfillment of which their leaders themselves were pledged, a state in which the police, indeed the very organs of government would not exist, in which full social equality would reign and in which every individual would be able to fulfill himself.

Now, with the material conditions for fulfillment of the great promise at last in sight, Soviet citizens have begun to raise specific questions about "the nature of the future organs of government in the villages and cities, about other details of Communist life."[11] An agitator in the Saratov area appealed to Moscow for guidance and knowledge of the future society; for, "deluged" by questions which he was unable to answer, he was in danger of "forfeiting his authority as an agitator".[12] One Soviet writer expressed his apprehensions lest an "unreasonable person" might entertain the following notion of communism: "you rise in the morning and you begin to reflect: where shall I go to work today—to the factory as the chief engineer, or shall I gather and lead the fishing brigade? Or perhaps fly to Moscow to conduct an urgent session of the Academy of Sciences?" *Kommunist,* quoting this flight of imagination, remarked laconically, "thus it will not be".[13]

Ideas are a force which no dictator can ignore with impunity. The eschatological imagination threatens to become a source of indiscipline, a breeder of "dangerous" expectations incompatible with the total claims of the State. Totalitarian order has to be imposed upon the anarchic vision without, however, robbing it of the enthusiasm and purposefulness that it imparted to its bearers. As early as October 13, 1952, Poskrebyshev, Stalin's secretary and *éminence grise* of the Soviet system, denounced in *Pravda* "those among us who await the coming of communism as if it were some heavenly

[9] See V. L. Israelyan and N. N. Nikolayev, "Iz istorii ideologicheskoi podgotovki kontr revoliutsionnovo miatezha v vengrii osenia 1956 Goda" *Voprosy istorii,* No. 12, 1957, pp. 59-76. See Khrushchev's unwitting tribute to the power of intellectuals and ideas, quoted on p. 76.

[10] *Voprosy filosofii,* No. 4, 1960, p. 14.

[11] *Kommunist,* No. 12, August 1960, p. 114.

[12] *Ibid,* p. 111.

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 117.

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paradise. They sit there and ask themselves: 'When will communism finally be proclaimed? Will we soon be getting things from society according to our needs?'" Eight years later, the theoretical organ of the party warned that the treatment of the future society must admit neither "over-simplification" nor "harebrain plans" (*prozhektorstvo*), that "to write now about the future is more complicated than ever before. The days of utopia, of arbitrary flights of fancy, have passed, giving way to higher responsibility in analyzing reality and in foresight."[14] And Khrushchev, at the 21st Party Congress, sought to dispel with oracular authority the "vulgar" conception of communism "as a formless, unorganized and anarchic mass of people. No, it will be a highly organized and arranged cooperation of workers. In order to direct machines, everybody will have to fulfill his functions as a laborer and his *social duties* at a determined time and in an established order."[15]

It was in the course of purging Marxist eschatology of its heretical elements that the party gained a clearer conception of the ultimate goal of its endeavor. What had heretofore been a tacit and only half-conscious conception became a more articulate vision.[16] Upon inspection, that vision reveals the hallmarks of a dream typical of party bureaucrats. If utopia mirrors the imaginary fulfillment of desires thwarted by reality, then the utopia of the party bureaucrats—the *apparatchiki*—reflects lust for unobstructed power: a perfected totalitarianism. As such, it bears a greater affinity to the ideals of Sparta, or the Republic of Plato, to Rousseau's ideal state, or to Thomas More's *Utopia,* than to the vague vision of Marx, although it is not altogether alien to it. Some strands of the Marxist ideal future are lifted from their original context, severed from the libertarian elements to which they had been organically linked, and woven into a new pattern which Marx would scarcely recognize. But before outlining the utopia of the *apparatchiki,* a brief excursion into political philosophy is in order.

The Quest for Harmony

Plato's Republic is the archetype of a political ideal which has found exponents in almost every period of Western civilization. Its adherents, for all their differences on the details of social organization, have been united by an impatience with the discordant diversity displayed by all human communities, impatience with the fact that at each moment of history the shape and organization of the community is determined not by conscious human planning in accordance with a system of logic and order, but by the vagaries of spontaneous social forces. Their aim has been to create concord and harmony in human affairs by reducing the complexity of society to a compartively simple formula. All men should be brought into harmonious communion by inculcating in them ideas that would move them to cooperative endeavor, that would make them accept their social status, however lowly, as a natural and unalterable condition, and that would nip the seeds of social envy and resentment before they take root. Thus the perennial problem of the rival claims of freedom and authority, of the reconciliation of the private will with communal demands, would find its final and permanent resolution. Repose and social solidarity will replace the restlessness and conflict which have been the inescapable collective human condition.

Plato proposed that an enlightened elite of philosopher-kings train its subjects to such obedient solidarity by inculcating in them "noble lies". Rousseau advocated that a "sovereign" be vested with the power to "fix the articles of a civil religion" which would beget an attitude making for "social unity" and abolish those conditions that set man in "contradiction to himself". St. Simon wished to see a "New Christianity", that is, a society in which the individuals would be held together by bonds of social consonance. The French "conservative reaction" and the group that the *Communist Manifesto* denounced as "feudal socialists" preached abandonment of the "anarchy" of bourgeois society for a social system framed in the image of the hierarchical order of the Middle Ages, allegedly blessed by universal concord. The Right and the Left in the 19th century, for all their differences and mutual enmity, were nourished by kindred psychic sources.[17]

Marx and Engels were heirs to the same tradition. They, too, sought social harmony. But unlike most others, they did not seek to achieve it through a reordering of society into a new harmonious hierarchy by an enlightened elite employing force and suasion. They believed that once private property and the means of production were abolished, the triumphant revolutionary majority would naturally merge into a cooperative community of *equals.* The division of humanity into classes

[14] *Ibid.,* p. 113.

[15] *Pravda,* January 28, 1959. Italics added.

[16] V. Dedijer records, in his biography of *Tito* (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1953, p. 296), a statement by Malenkov at the founding conference of the Cominform in 1947, that the Soviet Union was about "to adopt a fifteen-year plan of the transition from socialism to communism . . . drawing in detail upon the utopian socialists."

[17] For a penetrating discussion of the relation between Right and Left, see Raymond Aron, *Espoir et peur du siècle,* Paris, 1957, pp. 11-121.

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would then disappear. The state as an instrument of coercion would be replaced by an apparatus for the "administration of things" or, to use Lenin's suggestive term, into a "non-political" state. The highest degree of human freedom would thus produce the most perfect harmony ever experienced by man since the mythical days of primitive communism.

The vision of Marx has proved less realistic than that of the "utopian socialist" St. Simon and the "elitist" Right. It was a *coincidentia oppositorum.* Solidarity was to be achieved not by an elite consciously fostering *Bindung* and *Ganzheit,* the twin ideals of the conservative Right, but by a voluntary union of autonomous individuals governed by Reason. Harmony was to be bred by anarchy. It was left to the Bolshevik disciples of Marx to "correct" the teachings of their master, thus exposing the kinship between the reactionary Right and the radical Left.

Thus, while Bolshevism retains the economic ideals of Marx, it finds that *Bindung* and *Ganzheit* can be realized only by the means prescribed by the Right. Marx's utopia has been "dialectically" transmuted by the *apparatchiki.* Freedom is denounced as anarchy, self-government of society as anarcho-syndicalism, the autonomy of artistic creation as an anti-social propensity, the demand for privacy against the all-embracing claims of the collectivity as pernicious individualism. And as for the *apparatchiki* themselves, they have become the indispensable guides, wardens and tutors of society.

The aim of the party functionaries, then, is to impose upon society what might be termed totalitarian harmony; to remove, in the language of Soviet scholasticism, all contradictions from the body social; to prevent the coagulation of any social groups that threaten to assert themselves against the total embrace of the party. No spontaneous group-will must exist save that imparted by the ruling elite. "Spontaneity (*stykhiinost*), comrades", Khrushchev remarked at a Plenum of the Party Central Committee in 1958, "spontaneity is the deadliest enemy of all."[18] As for the divergent forces that spontaneity breeds, they are succinctly and revealingly summarized in the following excerpt from a major theoretical discussion of Communist transformation." According to its author, the aim of the party is:

. . . the unity of the working class, not its fragmentation; the strengthening of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, not discord between these two non-antagonistic classes; the strengthening of the unity of the ranks of the Marxist-Leninist Party, not factionalism and ideological rambling; the unified, planned socialist economy, based on public socialist property, not the anarcho-syndicalist economic fragmentation; the ideological, political and moral unity of the people, not ideological dispersion; reunion of people of various nationalities . . . not national differences and nationalism; the strengthening of a single socialist governmental power, not provincial separatism. . . .[19]

Or, in the words of Khrushchev:

Just like bees toiling from dawn to dusk, creating a new building and filling it with honey, so our people fulfill their obligations and functions in society.[20]

The Shape of the Future

Let us pause here to explore some of the specific features of the social beehive into which the party seeks to transform Soviet society.

The Ruling Elite. The Communist Party, having been the demiurge of Soviet society, will become its perpetual animator. To be sure, some functions of government will devolve upon "public organizations," and the "state would wither away" (whatever that may mean). But the role of the party will grow; for "who but the party is capable of uniting and coordinating the manifold activities of the ramified system of public organizations? The party is a higher form of public organization [and public organizations, as is well known, never wither]. It alone can and does give correct political direction to all organizations. Unlike all other

[18] *Plenum tsentralnovo komiteta kommunisticheskoi partii sovetskovo soiuza 15-19 dekabria 1958.* Stenograficheskii otchet, Moscow, 1958, p. 452.

[19] B. Ukraintsev, "Voprosy dialektiki pererastaniia sotsializma v kommunizm", *Kommunist,* No. 13, 1960, p. 72.

[20] *Pravda,* November 18, 1959. There is a striking similarity between Khrushchev's vision and Plutarch's description of Spartan life: "To be brief, he (Lycurgus) did accustom his citizens so, that they neither would nor could live alone, but were as men incorporated one with another and were always in company together, as the bees be about their master bee. Still in a continuall love to serve their countrie, to winne honour, and to advance the commonweale." (*Plutarch's Lives,* trans. by Sir Thomas North, Vol. I, p. 148.)

Khrushchev, however, would do well to acquaint himself also with the judgment of the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes, who wrote in *The Leviathan,* published in 1651: "It is true that certain living creatures, as Bees and Ants, live sociably with one another, (which are therefore by Aristotle numbred amongst Politicall creatures;) and yet have no other direction, than their particular judgment and appetites; nor speech, whereby one of them can signifie to another, what he thinks expedient for the common benefit; and therefore some man may perhaps desire to know, why Man-kind cannot do the same. To which I answer, First that men are continually in competition for Honour and Dignity, which these creatures are not; and consequently amongst men there ariseth on that ground, Envy and Hatred, and finally Warre; but amongst these not so."

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organizations, the party is not connected with any professional, departmental and local interests. The party sees farther than others. It has organizational and political experience".[21]

The party will rule, however, without coercion. The practitioners of violence will assume the role of philosopher-kings, whose main task will be to "conquer human souls",[22] "to convert the truth of Marxism-Leninism into the inner convictions of all without exception" until "every Soviet man" will be guided by it. "What has been confirmed by world history must find confirmation in the psyche of the individual."[23] The totalitarian ethos will become internalized—part and parcel of the psychic household of the individual. Ideological work will be the foremost task of the party, holding custody of the purity of men's minds, preventing their contamination by alien ideologies, and safeguarding against the emergence of a no less dangerous apolitical mental vacuum. Indeed, Khrushchev, fascinated by the suggestive term "brainwashing" (which he learned from an American), exhorted Soviet writers "to wash the brains of people with your works, not clutter up their minds".[24]

Freedom. Significantly, this word rarely appears in the voluminous discussions on the "transition to communism". But it is not difficult to divine, from the official texts, the extent and nature of freedom in the projected order. Obedience to the party will become an "organic necessity" of man,[25] his second nature, as it were. The desire for emancipation from its tutelage will be regarded as a pernicious rebellion against the ideal of collectivism, an expression of baneful individualism leading to "anarchy". But such anarchistic propensities will be as rare as they will be unnatural—a form of psycho-pathology. In Khrushchev's words:

Will there be criminals in Communist society? I personally, for example, as a Communist, cannot vouch that there will not be any. A crime is a deviation from the generally recognized standards of behavior in society, frequently caused by mental disorder. Can there be any diseases, mental disorders among some men in communist society? Evidently there can be. If that is so, then there can be delinquencies of which people of an abnormal mind are capable.[26].

In other words, deviation from the totalitarian norm will be treated as a form of insanity.

Equality. By 1930 the cry for equality of the disinherited, upon which the Bolsheviks had ridden to power, was silenced; and those who defiantly continued to demand that the promise of the Revolution be redeemed were denounced as petty-bourgeois deviationists. Utopia had yielded to the inexorable dictates of human nature, for which egalitarianism is a noble but impracticable ideal. To be sure, the Communist dictatorship continued to affirm its commitment to the Marxist principle, "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs"; but its realization, it was now argued, must await the distant day when the poverty to which Bolshevik Russia was heir should have been conquered by abundance, and when inequality of material rewards would no longer be needed to induce man, cleansed of capitalistic habits, to render his most efficient service to society.

Current Soviet discussion of the transition to communism again lays stress on egalitarianism as a vital feature of the future society. But the party's quest for equality is no longer sustained by the passion which originally brought it into being. The yearning of the disinherited for equality, nourished by resentment and envy, has turned into a calculated technique of totalitarian domination.

The distribution of goods and services according to need, already partially realized in such spheres as medical services, nurseries, and boarding schools, will ever widen until it embraces the full scope of human consumption. Such a mode of distribution will serve to strengthen the collectivist nature of Soviet society against manifestations of individualism, especially against "tendencies to private property," that "most terrible of all the survivals of capitalism" *(Pravda,* May 11, 1960). In terms strongly reminiscent of Plato's argument in favor of "communism," the party has been encouraging a widening of the scope of the "public satisfaction of 'needs'." According to *Kommunist* (No. 14, 1960, p. 19):

There is no doubt that all objects necessary for personal use will remain in personal use under communism as well. However, the outlook for the future does not correspond to the provision of workers and employees with immovable property—with private dwellings and country houses, with means of transportation [presumably automobiles], *i.e.,* with property that would allow them in certain cases to derive income without toil. . . . It would be inexpedient to encourage . . . private building.

But not only housing is to become "cooperative." All forms of distribution will eventually become collectivized. *Kommunist* goes on to say:

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[21] V. Ivanov, V. Pchelin, M. Sakov, "Vozrastanie roli partii v stroitelstve kommunizma," *Kommunist,* No. 17, November 1959, p. 15-16.

[22] L. Iliichev, "Voprosy kommunisticheskovo vospitaniia trudiashchikhsia", *Kommunist,* No. 14, 1959, p. 48.

[23] S. Yurovitskii, "Materialnye i moralnye stimuly proizvodstva", *Kommunist,* No. 12, 1960, p. 33.

[24] *Pravda,* May 23, 1959.

[25] *Kommunist,* No. 17, 1959, p. 20.

[26] Khrushchev, *op. cit.*

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Even now a substantial and ever-growing part of material and cultural goods are distributed among citizens regardless of the quality and quantity of their work. . . . The widening of the collective forms of satisfying the personal needs of the workers will constitute an important condition for sealing off the channels through which tendencies favoring private property might leak out.

Thus, in the conception of the party, egalitarian collectivism is a safeguard against individualism and the desire for private property, which might create "islets" of social autonomy eluding the control of the party. History has known many absolute rulers who sought to fortify their rule by levelling society and reducing it to an undifferentiated mass of impotent and obedient subjects. In the words of Shakespeare's *King Richard II:*

> **Go thou and like an executioner,**
> **Cut off the heads of too fast growing spray**
> **That look too lofty in our Commonwealth;**
> **All must be even in our government.**
> ***(Act III, Scene 4)***

The Family. Communism will be a period of *"consistent monogamy"*[27] (italics in original). "Communist morality is in principle opposed" to liaisons born of "dissoluteness and flightiness."[28] While rejecting with contempt the "slanders" heaped upon communist society in Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*[29]—both of which portrayed love under communism as controlled by the state, and procreation practiced by artificial means—Communist theoreticians make it clear that abjuration of the leftist deviation of free love, which the regime briefly sanctioned during the 1920's, remains in force. Marital infidelity and sexual promiscuity, it would seem, breed a frame of mind that militates against the discipline of totalitarianism. The puritanical code must permeate the whole of society. As *Komsomolskaia Pravda* (April 11, 1959) asked, in reporting a case of marital "betrayal": "How many steps are there from this to treason in the broader sense . . .?"

As for the household functions of the family, they will be gradually replaced by public restaurants and laundries, both of which will increase in volume as well as in quality. Yet the family will definitely retain its "moral and educative" functions. Although the rearing of children will, to a considerable extent, be transferred to the expanding network of boarding schools, the family will continue to share in that task. In the words of one writer, the "joys of fatherhood and motherhood are indispensable to man," and represent an important factor in the education of children."[30] At the same time, the boarding schools will be expected to play an ever-increasing role, inasmuch as they are best equipped to eradicate "egoistic" tendencies—*i.e.,* individualism.

The Discipline of Leisure. In the past few years, the party has evinced a growing concern with the uses to which Soviet citizens put the leisure gained by technological advances. For it is, indeed, endemic to a totalitarian regime that it insist on integrating *res privata* into *res publica.* In this respect, the similarity between communism and fascism is striking. "In National Socialism", one Nazi official proclaimed, "there is no such thing as a private individual."[31]

Leisure encourages privacy and the pursuit of "idle pleasures". It offers many opportunities for social activities beyond the sphere of control of the totalitarian regime. Sensual gratification may become the dominant preoccupation of man, making him impervious to political discipline. In the conception of the party, all men must be imbued with political consciousness; for "not to have the correct political view is like having no soul".[32] Accordingly, the levers of the totalitarian regime must embrace individuals at home as well as at work. It is in this context that the recent stream of denunciatory articles against "idlers, sluggards and parasites" can best be understood. To cite an excerpt from one such article chosen at random:

We conduct political, cultural and educative work primarily in enterprises and establishments, *i.e.,* at places of work. But man does not work 24 hours a day. He spends the greater part of his time at home where he rests, studies

[27] A. Kharchev, "Semia i kommunizm", *Kommunist,* No. 7, 1960, p. 63.
[28] *Ibid.,* p. 61.
[29] *Ibid.,* p. 59.

Family Life and Labor Training

The plenary session [of the Central Committee of the Komsomol] believes that Young Communist League organizations should take an interest in the way young people's family lives develop. Families in which a genuine mutual concern about cultural growth is evident and domestic responsibilities are properly shared by all members of the family should be held up as examples. It is necessary to encourage the participation of children, adolescents and young men and women in the performance of domestic chores and to appreciate this as an important and integral part of labor training.

—Komsomolskaia pravda, Aug. 5, 1960, p. 3.

[30] *Ibid.,* p. 61.
[31] Quoted in Hans Rothfels, *Die Deutsche Opposition gegen Hitler,* Fischer Bucherei, Frankfurt, 1958, p. 32.
[32] Mao Tse-tung, "Let 100 Flowers Bloom," *New Leader,* New York, September 9, 1957, p. 41.

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and amuses himself. Can we be indifferent to the manner in which he conducts his mode of life?"[33]

The remedies proposed are: (1) the intensification of vigilantism by "public organizations," such as the "neighborhood courts against parasitism" and citizens' brigades which, under the discreet guidance of the party, would ferret out idlers and guard against such frivolities as card-playing, drunkenness and eccentricities of dress.[34] (2) The enlargement of facilities for public entertainment and recreation, such as clubs and cafes where citizens would amuse themselves under a watchful public eye.[35] (3) The fostering of a distinctive Communist mode of life providing esthetic gratification. The ceremonial occasions in the life of an individual (weddings, funerals, birthdays, etc.) should be suffused with the symbols of the collective. In short, the private domain must be transformed into the public domain—controlled, supervised, and dominated by the Communist Party.

[33] *Pravda,* September 6, 1960.

[34] For an illuminating treatment of this problem, see "Trud, svobodnoe vremia i vsestoronnoe razvitie lichnosti," *Politicheskoe samoobrazovanie,* No. 5, 1960.

[35] A representative discussion of this issue may be found in K. Panteleeva, "Razvivat i sovershenstvovat kommunisticheskie formy byta", *Molodoy kommunist,* No. 9, 1959.

Holidays Under Communism

The Central Committee of the CPSU has instructed the party organizations to evince more solicitude for political and cultural enlightenment work during the workers' days of rest and holidays. On such days they are to arrange meetings with leading workers in the scientific field as well as in literature and the arts, and with production innovators; to organize walks in the squares, parks and market places; to arrange sports competitions, collective excursions of workers and employees with the participation of leading workers, and so on.

—Editorial in *Partinaia zhizn,* No. 6, 1960, p. 31.

With the expansion of free time under socialism, each working person receives greater opportunity to raise his cultural level, to perfect his knowledge; he can better fulfill his social obligations and raise his children, better organize his rest, participate in sports, and so on. All this is necessary for the all-sided development of a human being.

Simultaneously, free time . . . serves as a powerful factor in raising labor productivity. It was in this sense that Marx called free time the greatest productive force exerting an influence in turn on the productive force of labor. Thus, free time and working time are interconnected and interdependent.

—G. Prudenski, in Kommunist, No. 16, 1960, p. 40.

SUCH, IN BROAD OUTLINE, is the ideal society envisioned by the party. Yet this ideal is probably no more than a chimera. For all that we know about man and society seems incompatible with its realization. Even the tools of modern technology have not endowed a dictator with the capacity to mold society as if it were clay in his hands; and the means available to the *apparatchiki* are ludicrously inadequate to the enormity of the task. They hesitate to use the incalculable weapon of terror, which tends to recoil upon its wielder. "Man", said Khrushchev, (*Pravda,* July 4, 1960), "must not be driven into paradise by means of the club." And the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, which aims to instill obedience to the party, is growing less and less relevant and meaningful. Instead of animating Soviet citizens with enthusiasm, it often induces somnolence in them.

The Communists aspire to "leap" from the "necessity" of compromising with *stykhiinost* into the realm of absolute "freedom" from it, to sway the wayward course of social change into a narrow channel fixed by the party. But it is doubtful that the complex course of history can be made fully to obey the dictates of a political machine. The mark of unpredictability is written on all historical action. Almost every historical deed breeds unintended consequences. "Man makes his own history, but he does not know the history he is making." Will the party be exempt from this rule which has hitherto governed human destiny?

But perhaps, in their heart of hearts, the Communist leaders cherish less the ideal goal than the pursuit of it. Tension and struggle are the pith and marrow of their endeavor. They lend meaning and purpose to their existence. The reward of ultimate conquest would be intolerable ennui. The mantle of philosopher-king ruling a populace trained to unswerving obedience would ill fit the *apparatchiki* who have imbibed the ethos of perpetual struggle. To the question "what is your idea of happiness?," the typical *apparatchik* would probably reply with Marx, "to fight." *Subconsciously,* he would thus echo the words of Mussolini: "We have created our myth, the myth is a faith, it is a passion, it is not necessary that it shall be a reality. It is a reality by the fact that it is a goal, a hope, a faith that is courage."

The Bolshevik dictatorship may long endure, always pursuing the unattainable goal—the conquest of spontaneity. "The movement is everything, the end is nothing."

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Totalitarianism without Coercion?

By Herbert Ritvo

MILOVAN DJILAS, in his classic probe of the fallacies of the Communist system, characterized "the question of the state" and its role in society as "the most important problem for communism, in theory and practice."[1] During the first four decades of the Soviet Union's existence, its political leaders all espoused the theoretical axiom of the ultimate "withering away of the state," but none of them was seriously confronted with the problem of implementing it in practice. Today, however, with the declaration that the USSR is well advanced economically along the road to full communism, the issue has become of crucial importance for the Soviet leadership—especially for the man who has successfully reasserted personal dictatorship over the party-state. The purpose of the present paper is to examine: 1) Khrushchev's approach to this vital issue, both in theoretical pronouncements and in practical policies, which has resulted in a unique readjustment of the party-state relationship; 2) the effect of his innovations on the present Soviet scene, and their portent, real or visionary, for the future of the society; 3) the intimately related problem, again both in theory and practice, of the shifting balance between coercion and persuasion in Soviet life.

Doctrinal Precedents

Khrushchev's theory of state quite naturally uses the doctrinal heritage left by his predecessors as its take-off point. Lenin, in his fullest treatment of the subject, stressed that "it is clear there can be no question of defining the exact moment of the *future* withering away —the more so as it must be a rather lengthy process."[2] Stalin as successor treated the indeterminate duration of the state as contingent upon two independent but related factors: 1) the continued existence of *internal* enemies, causing an inevitable intensification of the class struggle during the advance towards socialism;[3] 2) the presence of hostile *external* forces, constituting a "capitalist encirclement" of the solitary socialist state.[4] He thereby asserted the indispensability of maintaining the strongest possible state apparatus.

At the 20th CPSU Congress in 1956, Khrushchev—already the *primus inter pares* in the "collective leadership"—bitterly condemned the first of these Stalinist notions in his famous secret speech. Subsequent developments, however—particularly the Hungarian uprising in the fall of 1956—lead him to some retreat from this stance. The concept of increasing class conflict, which Stalin used to rationalize the total terror of the 1930's, has been partially rehabilitated (along with Stalin himself) in the sense that it is no longer characterized as one of his major errors.[5] Indeed, the conspicuous absence of either criticism or affirmation of this notion in recent theoretical discussions suggests that it is probably viewed as an ideological weapon to be held in reserve—for potential use not so much at home, where socialism is ostensibly an "irreversible reality," as

[1] M. Djilas, *The New Class,* F. A. Praeger, New York, 1957, p. 84.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *State and Revolution (1917),* Little Lenin Library, New York, 1932, Vol. 14, p. 69. Lenin's italics.

[3] J. Stalin, *Mastering Bolshevism,* International Publishers, New York, 1937, pp. 29-30.

[4] Stalin, *Problems of Leninism* (1926), ed. of 1940, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, p. 131.

[5] See K. Frolov, "The Class Struggle in the Period of Construction of Socialism," *Partiinaia zhizn,* No. 20, 1956, pp. 4-5; *Einheit* (East Berlin), No. 11, 1956; *Partiinaia zhizn,* No. 24, 1956. See also R. Lowenthal, "Stalinist Ideology," *Soviet Survey* (London), July-September 1960, p. 35.

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in the peoples' democracies, where the organs of coercion may again be required to suppress open opposition.

With much less ambiguity, the second of Stalin's explanations for the longevity of the state has been retained and adapted to cover the period of building communism. Although it is admitted that the "capitalist encirclement" of the Stalin era ceased to exist after the creation of a "socialist commonwealth," Khrushchev's case for the continued strengthening of the military might of the state as long as hostile blocs exist is practically indistinguishable from his predecessor's talk of "external enemies."[6]

THE REJECTION—if now only by implication—of Stalin's concept of the "inevitable intensification of the class struggle" is directly connected with the new approach to the coercive functions of the state and their partial transfer to "public" organizations. To understand this relationship, the role of terror as a mechanism of social control under Stalinism should be recalled. Until the day of his death the dictator used terror primarily in the negative sense—*i.e.,* to guarantee the suppression of opposition, imaginary as well as genuine. It could be argued that the application of terror also facilitated the speedy accumulation of capital needed by a fledgling planned economy aiming at rapid industrialization, by effectively preventing any organized protest against the huge sacrifices imposed on an unwilling population. Yet even the Stalin regime recognized that the resort to mass arrests by the millions to fill the slave labor camps was decisive only for extending rudimentary industrialization to the more remote corners of the Soviet Union and for achieving the initial phase of Marxist "primitive accumulation." Moreover, untold damage was done to the economy as a result of the liquidation of scarce technicians and administrators in the purges. Thus it would be as misleading to consider Soviet industrial accomplishments the direct consequence of terror and forced labor as it would be to attribute Soviet achievements in atomic research to successful espionage or to the forced contributions of captured German scientists.

The announcement of Stalin's death clearly reflected the apprehension of other leaders over the cumulative impact of Stalinist terror; in the joint statement issued by the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers, the collective of his successors warned against "disorder and panic" in words pregnant with their own doubts and fears.[7] Within a month a limited amnesty had been announced, the reform of the criminal code promised, the "doctors' plot" exposed as a fraud, and the top secret police official, S. D. Ignatiev, removed in disgrace. Precisely why or how these decisions, clearly designed to reduce the degree of terror, were made remains unknown even today, but their broader consequences—foreseen by few at the time—have become increasingly evident. The regime has not renounced the main instrument of terror, the secret police, but has simply re-established the principle (and practice) of party control over the police apparatus as the guarantee of new "socialist legality." At the same time, the promise that the methods of the past were not to be employed in the future—accompanied by the release of thousands from the forced labor camps and prisons—became the starting point of a process of rationalization of the worst heritage of Stalin's rule, the first step out of the darkness of Stalin's all-embracing terror onto the path of what has been called "enlightened totalitarianism" or the "relatively benevolent despotism" of the post-Stalin dictatorship, today again exercised by one man.[8]

Khrushchev's Innovations

It is of course natural that Khrushchev, as head of the party-state, should now have emerged as the major interpreter of the Marxist-Leninist theory of state and as the arbiter of the changing ratio of coercion and persuasion in the regime's accelerated approach to communism. While no real attention was paid to these doctrinal problems before the final resolution of the power struggle in the Presidium, the first sign of the theoretical innovations to come was the inclusion of the following charge in the bill of particulars presented against the "anti-party" group in July 1957:

(The anti-party group) tried to elevate the state above the party . . . challenged the party's basic right to take the leading role in the affairs of the Soviets . . . tried to reduce the party to a position where it would be subordinate to the governmental apparatus. . . .[9]

Having thus defined one of the basic issues of conflict with his opponents—one which compares interestingly

[6] Interview of Khrushchev in *Le Figaro* (Paris), March 19, 1958; also *Krasnaia zvezda,* April 5, 1958.

[7] *Pravda,* March 7, 1953.

[8] Terms used respectively by A. Ulam in "The New Face of Soviet Totalitarianism," *World Politics,* April 1960, p. 410; and L. Schapiro in "Has Russia Changed?," *Foreign Affairs,* April 1960, p. 397.

[9] *Kommunist,* August 1957, as quoted in *The New York Times,* August 1, 1957.

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with the charges against Beria four years earlier[10]—Khrushchev was ready to venture forth onto the troublesome ideological terrain of clarifying the party-state relationship of the future. In the fall of 1957 and early 1958 he issued a series of pronouncements in press interviews and speeches establishing the framework on which current doctrine is based.[11] The dominant refrain in these statements, as well as in comments by the professional theoreticians, was an assurance that there will be no "weakening of the role of the state in [the period of] building communism," more explicitly though less frequently expressed as the notion retained from Stalinism that "the state proceeds towards its withering away via its maximum strengthening."[12] In an attempt, evidently, to instill more logic into this dialectical detour of the state on the road to Engels' "museum of antiquities," Khrushchev added a notion of his own which has become his major contribution to Marxism-Leninism. He resolved the "non-antagonistic" contradiction between the eventual disappearance of the state and its immediate strengthening by the disarmingly simple solution of substituting the ruling party for the state. In an interview of early 1958 with a foreign correspondent, Khrushchev propounded this theme as follows:

A certain loosening of the administrative ties between *raions*, regions and republics is now taking place here. At the same time the ideological ties between regions and republics and the unity of the Soviet peoples are being strengthened. The Communist Party plays an important role [in this process] and this [role] will grow stronger. . . . Changes in the functions of the state are also taking place. The process of change in these functions derives from our conceptions, from the theoretical principles of Marxism-Leninism on the state. When the conditions for the transition to communism have been created in our country, many administrative organs of the state will gradually die away. . . . The party has stronger foundations than the state organs. It has arisen and exists not as a result of duties of a legislative nature. Its development was called for by circumstances stemming from the political concepts of people . . . from principles of a moral nature. And mankind will always need moral factors.[13]

From these and other statements, in combination with various practical measures undertaken to elevate party authority, the concept of the ruling party (*pravíashchaia partiia*) emerged in full outline. An important aspect of this concept is the direct link established between the changing party-state relationship and the allegedly shifting balance of coercion and persuasion in Soviet society. The direction set by Khrushchev in this respect has recently been defined in the Soviet press in the following terms:

If the Communist Party and the socialist state existed and worked together in the past, do [so] in the present, and will [do so] *in the future under certain conditions, this* does not mean that such will be the case forever. . . . The Communist Party and the socialist state, in their role and position in society and in their given functions are not identical. The party takes the leading position in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, it directs the internal and foreign policy of the state. . . . The party as an ideological political organization depends completely and fully on persuasion in the direction of the masses, the state on force as well as on persuasion. . . . The party is the only force which is in a position to guarantee, through its leadership, the transition from a socialist state to the Communist administration of society. . . . The methods of persuasion . . . are winning more and more ground in the life of Soviet society and under communism they will become the sole regulator of relations among people. Together with this, the importance of the party *will grow still more since its leadership of the masses . . .* rests upon the propagation of the great ideas of Marxism-Leninism.[14]

The Theory of Participation

The concept of the gradual substitution of persuasion for coercion under the guidance of the supreme party has as its crucial corollary the development of proper attitudes in the population at large and the broadening of popular participation in the regulation of society, to be effected mainly through the expansion of so-called "public" or "social" organizations. In theory such participation is linked to the future expiration of the state; as Khrushchev has put it:

Which organizations will be preserved [under communism]? Public organizations. Whether they are called Komsomol, trade unions, or some other names, they will be public bodies through which society will regulate its

[10] Beria was charged with "activities aimed at placing the Ministry of Interior above the Government and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union"; Malenkov's report to the Central Committee, *Pravda,* July 10, 1953.

[11] Interviews with James Reston (of *The New York Times*) H. Shapiro (of United Press), and A. I. Macdonald (of the London *Times*), respectively in *Pravda* Oct. 11, 1957; Nov. 19, 1957; and Feb. 17, 1958; speech on the 40th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, *ibid.,* Oct. 7, 1957; report on agricultural reforms, *ibid.,* March 28, 1958; speech to the 13th Komsomol Congress, *ibid.,* April 2, 1958.

[12] Quotations respectively from Khrushchev's speech at the 21st CPSU Congress, *Pravda,* January 28, 1959; and V. Nikolaiev, *Sovetskaia moldavia,* Jan. 16, 1958.

[13] Interview with A. I. Macdonald, *loc. cit.*

[14] G. Shitarev, "The Party and the Building of Communism," *Politicheskoie samoobrazovaniie,* No. 8, 1960.

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relations. . . . We now have to prepare for this and to teach people to develop habits for these functions.[15]

It is significant that the two types of organizations mentioned—the Komsomol and the trade unions—have long been described as the "transmission belts" or "loyal helpers" of the party and have been effectively subordinated to its direction and control. What will happen to the party itself under full communism is never explicity spelled out; but insofar as the period of building communism is concerned it is frankly stated that the "voluntary" public organizations now emerging on the Soviet scene and any others created in the future will be as closely controlled by the party as the existing veteran auxiliaries of its rule:

The party is now the highest form of political organization . . . in the USSR. As long as there are [other] organizations . . . on a state level, . . . in production, trade unions, cooperatives, or by age [*i. e.*, the Komsomol], the party remains the leading force with respect to each one individually and with regard to all together; only the Communist Party is capable of coordinating and guiding the work of all state and social organizations in the interest of building communism. . . .[16]

IN PROPOUNDING the various ideas outlined above, Mr. Khrushchev has, in a sense, killed two birds with one stone: he can point to the beginning, however feeble, of the "withering away of the state" under communism through the transfer of some state functions to "social organizations"; at the same time his innovations serve the purpose of diminishing the previous duality of party-state guidance of Soviet society in favor of increasingly monistic rule. Putting it more broadly, the line now pursued by Khrushchev reflects the two constants in terms of which Soviet policy must always be judged: first, the need to meet the demands of an ideology which forecasts a process of continuing change in the social order on the basis of a dialectical development toward communism; second, the need to maintain the monopoly of power of the leadership (today through the reassertion of the ruling party) in an historically unique form of totalitarian dictatorship, the Soviet one-party state.

It is tempting, given the 43-year record of absolute rule by successive Soviet regimes, to dismiss the picture now being painted of the coming Communist future as mere propaganda or as visionary nonsense. Yet whatever the prospects of Khrushchev's version of utopia ever being realized, one cannot ignore the current effects of the stress on substituting persuasion for coercion and of replacing control through the state machine with correction through the community. While the measures which have been initiated in the name of these ideas are transparent in their aim of buttressing the role of the party, their impact on the society has other important implications which are crucial to an assessment of the present and future Soviet scene.

[15] Speech to the 13th Komsomol Congress, *loc. cit.*

[16] Shitarev, *op. cit.*

Something Old, Something New . . .

The measures spoken of here constitute an attempt by the regime to storm the remaining barriers between public and private life in the Soviet Union, in an atmosphere of "revolutionary" fervor designed to recall the enthusiasm of the early days of struggle under Lenin. Under the slogan of work, study and live in a Communist manner, "the apparatus of the totalitarian party-state has been mobilizing the population for a vast exercise in "self-control" which seeks to penetrate not only into the factories and the fields, but into the schools, all social and public activity, and indeed into the most intimate spheres of family life. While many of the forms which this mobilization has taken have their roots or prototypes in the Leninist and Stalinist past, the scope of the effort is perhaps unprecedented. As mentioned earlier, primary stress has been laid on the creation of a network of so-called "public organizations" through the initiative of activists at the local level. These organizations cover a broad range of special functions or activities, major and minor.

One of the pressing practical aims of the regime is, of course, to promote cooperation in the accelerated economic drive demanded by the current Seven-Year Plan. In this connection, a crucial example of public mobilization is the nationwide campaign to enlist workers in the Brigades of Communist Labor, a movement initiated in 1958 and said to have rallied over 5,000,000 workers in more than 40,000 brigades as of last June.[17] Throughout Soviet history—from the *Subbotniks* [voluntary labor days] of the civil war period through the *Stakhanovite* competitions of the Stalin Five-Year Plans, the primary function of "spontaneous movements" among Soviet workers has been to increase labor productivity and efficiency. The new movement follows suit in the priority of the three vows demanded of its members:

1). To increase production, organize well, . . . economize, insistently introduce new equipment and technology, use advanced methods at work.
2.) To study constantly, strive to master modern knowledge in the fields of science and technology . . . [and]

[17] *Pravda,* June 1, 1960.

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of socialist culture, so as to be of use not only to oneself, but to the entire collective, to society.
3.) To cultivate in oneself the best features of the new society, develop oneself in an all-round manner mentally and physically, be exemplary in daily life [and] in one's attitude toward public duty, and struggle actively for a new morale.[18]

In commenting on the last of these pledges a Soviet writer has asserted:

Communist labor brigade members and shock workers, for the first time in the history of competition, are imposing on themselves obligations of a moral character. They pledge to combat the vestiges of the past in the consciousness of the people, to strengthen comradely solidarity and collaboration in work and living, and to be the guardians of the norms of socialist society. This is one of the most essential characteristics of the new movement.[19]

Insofar as the members of the brigades now pledge themselves *explicitly* not only to increase production but to cultivate the new "Soviet morality," the writer's enthusiastic description of the third vow is justified. At the same time, inculcation of "proper" attitudes toward work and society is hardly a new feature of such "spontaneous movements" among workers. Here, for instance, is a random selection from the past, strikingly similar to the exhortations that fill the pages of today's *Trud:* "In every brigade, in every department, in every factory, one must create such conditions that poor work is a personal disgrace for everyone." [20] The difference between the past and the present is one of emphasis, reflecting the social and economic changes that have taken place in the Soviet Union within the past two decades. Whereas in the 1930's and 1940's the primary goal of the regime was to expand production, almost regardless of cost, the aim now is also to *refine* it—and to do that, mere pressure and exertion are not enough; "reform from without" must slowly give way to "reform from within."

Granting this difference of emphasis, there is a basic similarity between past labor drives and the present movement epitomized in the claim of their "spontaneous" development. It would be premature to state categorically that the personal pledges of the current movement will degenerate into the ritualistic stereotypes and pressures that characterized those of the past. Yet the evidence so far available permits a skeptical view of the predicted emergence of the "new Communist man" striving for that ideal admixture of production and personality development envisioned in regime propaganda. In a recent theoretical discussion, for example, the complaint was aired:

Despite the simultaneous solution of the most important Communist tasks in the three spheres of labor, education and way of life, the brigades as a rule show the greatest successes in raising productivity. It frequently happens that some members of the brigades . . . attain high production figures [but] do not always behave in everyday life as they should.[21]

Human Development—Labor Efficiency

Under communism the daily routine may be conceived, with a certain degree of probability, as follows:

Natural needs—sleep and meals—will take up about ten hours. About four hours will be needed for obligatory work. Every man, then, is left with about ten hours of free time at his disposal. And if about four hours are spent on some mental work or reading that interests the particular person, and an equal amount of time in active participation in sports and amateur arts, two hours will then remain for relaxation at the television set, a concert, or the movies.

Such a daily routine will ensure the truly comprehensive development of each person's aptitudes, while the constant shift of pursuits will make labor more attractive, leading in turn to a new increase in labor efficiency.

—S. Strumilin, in Oktyabr, March 1960.

The Vehicles of "Public Order"

Among other "public" organizations now in operation, none are more important than the parapolice and parajudicial institutions, whose function, in Khrushchev's words, is to act "alongside and parallel with such agencies as the militia and courts to perform the functions of safeguarding public order and security." [22] Although the network of these organizations has existed, in one form or another, for some time, the scope of their specific activities and authority is still subject to considerable discussion. Chief among them are the people's militia and the comrades' courts, along with the forms of public activity authorized by the anti-parasite laws of 1957-58.

The people's militia (*druzhiny*) are the direct descendants of the *brigadmils* formed in the early 1930's to aid in the collectivization drive. Discredited as a re-

[18] *Voprosi filosofii,* No. 10, 1959, p. 135.
[19] *Ibid.*
[20] *Trud,* Sept. 15, 1949.
[21] Ts. Stepanyan, "Stages and Periods," *Oktyabr,* No. 7, 1960.
[22] Khrushchev's speech at 21st CPSU Congress, *loc. cit.*

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sult of their collaboration with the police and the NKVD during the purge period, the *brigadmils* died out almost completely until late 1956, when the idea of using them was revived in connection with the renewed "struggle against anti-social elements." The start of the present country-wide mobilization is credited to the initiative of a "workers' militia group" in Leningrad in November 1958. Early in 1959 the militia's role was formalized in a joint decree of the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers "On Participation of Workers in the Maintenance of Public Order." [23] It was subsequently announced that within a month of the decree's issuance, "voluntary" militia units had been formed in most large industrial and agricultural enterprises; [24] according to latest claims, there are now 80,000 units with more than 2.5 million members.[25] In Moscow, at least, entire factory units and labor brigades have joined the militia, strongly suggesting that it is intended to develop into a full-fledged mass movement.[26]

Past criticism in the Soviet press, indicating that the regular police was unequal to the task of dealing with petty public disorders, seemingly provided sufficient practical reason for the formation of an ancillary police force. But the regime, as might be expected, chose to stress an ideological explanation for the re-emergence of the people's militia, citing it as an example of "the inclusion of the widest strata of the population in the management of the affairs of the country during the transition to communism." [27]

In the decree governing their activity, the authority of the people's militia was clearly restricted to warning offenders and to listing their names so that subsequent misdemeanors could be dealt with more severely by the comrades' courts or the regular police. In practice, however, their actions frequently have involved transgressions of the law and frightening invasions of personal privacy. The Soviet press has cited cases of illegal night-time searches to check on individuals' moral behavior, beatings administered to young people, and in one case a citizen's death by assault.[28]

While such negative excesses are criticized by the press and may be considered exceptions in the early phase of a unique experiment in social control, the praise generally accorded to militia activities affirms the basic concept of public intervention in private life. As one report pridefully states, "no social act escapes the attention of squad members." [29] Among the legitimate concerns of the people's militia, a favorite project is the "reeducation of drunkards," the typical approach to which is described as follows:

> **The members of [a militia] unit listed all the inhabitants of the settlement who regularly got drunk and in that state . . . committed anti-social acts. These people were summoned to a meeting . . . and warned of the necessity to mend their ways. Besides this, a member of the unit was attached to each one of them for the purposes of daily education work. The members of the unit visited [their assignees] in their homes, found out how they behaved, . . . and tried to get them to take part in mass communal activities. In a number of instances, on pay day the members of the unit met the lovers of strong liquor at the pay office [and] escorted them home. . . . The number of drunkards in the settlement dropped sharply. . . .**[30]

People's Justice

The area of parajudicial activity is a more difficult one to assess, mainly because of the confusion which exists over the division of responsibility between the "public meetings" authorized under the aforementioned "anti-parasite" draft laws and the "comrades' courts," more recently stressed as the chief instruments of social correction.

The anti-parasite laws, presented for public discussion in 1957-58, have not yet been ratified in the three largest Soviet republics (the RSFSR, the Ukraine and Belorussia, containing over 80 percent of the total population), and since they have been treated with considerable reserve even in Soviet publications, it is possible they may still be subjected to further change. As they now stand, the laws authorize public organizations to hold open trials against "parasitic elements," only loosely defined. The public meetings, at which a minimum of 100 persons must be present, can act, by simple majority vote and even in the absence of an alleged offender, to impose sentences of exile with compulsory labor for two to five years—this despite the provisions in criminal legislation adopted in 1958 which state that "criminal punishment shall be imposed only by judgment of a court." [31] There is no appeal from the decision of these meetings, although sentences must be confirmed by the executive committees of local soviets.[32]

[23] Published in *ibid.*, March 10, 1959.
[24] N. Dudorov, USSR Minister for Internal Affairs, as quoted in *Izvestia,* June 24, 1959.
[25] *Kommunist,* No. 10, 1960.
[26] See *Komsomolskaia pravda,* August 30, 1960.
[27] Khrushchev's speech at the 21st CPSU Congress, *loc. cit.*
[28] *Izvestia,* March 4, 1960; *Komsomolskaia pravda,* Aug. 27, and Oct. 6, 1960.
[29] Radio Volozda, Dec. 16, 1959.
[30] *Sovetskaia yustitsia,* No. 3 (March), 1960.
[31] Article 3, Principles of Criminal Legislation, adopted as law in December 1958.
[32] As revealed by the law adopted in the Georgian republic, published in *Zaria vostoka,* Sept. 6, 1960.

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It is hardly necessary to point out the potential dangers of the return to this sort of extra-judicial power, the easy abuse of which was amply demonstrated in Stalin's day by the terroristic "special conferences" of the NKVD-MVD. Ostensibly directed against "useless" members of society, the present laws could be turned against any individual on artificially contrived pretexts, by the action of any of the party's "transmission belts." Even to those who view other recent developments in Soviet law in an optimistic light, the possibilities of unrestrained "mob rule" inherent in the anti-parasite laws are portents of trouble; for those who take a more skeptical view, the extra-judicial show trials constitute simply a new instrument of terror available in the arsenal of the totalitarian state. At the least, all knowledgeable observers join in deeming the laws a threat to the already shaky "security of the legal procedure of the USSR." [33] In short, the laws, though presented as a remedy for behavior injurious to the body politic, seem much more likely to raise the public fever than to cure the social ills which are juridically still beyond the competence of the regular courts.

THE RECENT REVIVAL of the comrades' courts, a more formal institution than the "public meeting," may reflect the regime's response to the apprehension over the anti-parasite laws apparent within the Soviet Union itself. On the other hand, the Soviet press has indicated a disposition on the part of participants in the "public meetings" not only to refrain from harsh penalties for serious first offenses but to be excessively considerate (from the regime's viewpoint) of multiple offenders—a fact which could also explain the current signs of official dissatisfaction with this lowest form of "citizens' justice." [34] In any event, since 1959 there has been a determined effort to reestablish and to extend the activities of comrades' courts, which have roots dating back to the first years of the regime. The present scope of their functions and authority, like that of the public meetings, is still defined only in draft regulations,[35] but the indications are that the party now intends to make the courts a chief instrument in regulating the balance between persuasion and coercion in Soviet society.

The forerunners of the present comrades' courts were concerned almost exclusively with violations of labor discipline; created during the civil war, they operated from 1919 until 1923 and again from 1928 until 1940, when Stalin's severe labor legislation made them superfluous. By contrast, the revived courts, like other public organizations, have been directed to concern themselves with all aspects of social behavior. Set up wherever a collective exceeds fifty persons—in industrial, agricultural, and educational institutions, apartment blocks, *etc.*—the comrades' courts, in Khrushchev's words, are "to seek mainly to anticipate all kinds of infringements; they must deal not only with questions of production but with questions of everyday life and of a moral nature, cases of wrong behavior by members of a collective who have . . . [digressed] from standards of public order. . . ." [36] Under this broad umbrella, the list of offenses falling to the courts' consideration would seem to be limitless; reported cases range from charges involving citizens' failure to bring up children properly, uttering insulting remarks, or spreading falsehoods, to a variety of minor property and housing disputes. In many instances the comrades' courts handle problems, allocated by the regular courts and police, which are not considered to involve "social danger" and for which penalties are not mandatory under the law. Outside the factory, most of their work involves cases initiated by trade union and Komsomol committees, local soviets, the peoples' militia, or street and housing committees.[37]

Although the proposed procedural rules for the comrades' courts constitute a marked improvement over those of the informal "public meetings," they are still a far cry from the judicial standards prevailing in the regular court system. For example, there is no real pretrial hearing or attempts at an investigation, but merely a "check up on facts," on the assumption that the community, including court members, is already acquainted with the problem at hand; there is also no provision for a defense counsel, and only the court can call witnesses. If a citizen refuses to stand trial, the court can proceed in his absence. As in the case of the "public meetings," decisions are taken by a majority vote, and there is no right of appeal. However, the courts are responsible to the trade unions in enterprises or the executive committees of local soviets, in the sense that the latter may suggest a second trial if there has been an obvious contravention of Soviet law.

Partially offsetting these shortcomings, and in marked contrast to the provisions of the anti-parasite laws, the decisions of the comrades' courts are restricted to: 1) expressing public reprimand or censure, imposing a fine

[33] See, *e.g.*, R. Schlesinger, "The Discussion on Criminal Law and Procedure," *Soviet Studies* (London), January 1959, p. 297.
[34] See *Izvestia*, Sept. 10, 1959.
[35] Published in *ibid.*, Oct. 24, 1959.
[36] *Pravda*, Jan. 28, 1959.
[37] Cf. Paul Barton, "The Current Status of the Soviet Worker," *Problems of Communism*, No. 4 (July-Aug.), 1960, for a detailed discussion of the courts as they operate in the factories.

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up to 100 rubles on offenders, and/or issuing regrets to victims; 2) in cases of labor violations, recommending transfer or demotion of the offenders to less important and lower-paid work, or in extreme cases, their dismissal; 3) ordering compensation for damages up to 500 rubles; 4) referring criminal cases, as well as cases involving housing evictions, to the regular courts. It seems clear that all major crimes—and in fact the more serious of those now classified as minor—will remain within the competence of the regular court system and the police.

In short, the basic function assigned to the comrades' courts is not to administer punishment, but to demonstrate the redemptive powers of the assumption of communal responsibility for citizens who have erred in their ways but who can still be saved for society. Since the educative role of Soviet law has always been an important consideration in theory, the emphasis on community cures for delinquency is not, as pointed out earlier, a new feature in itself. But as a result of the vastly broadened and also loosely defined competence of the comrades' courts, there will be a tremendous increase in the number of people, in no legal sense criminals, who now come within the reach of these parajudicial organizations. As explained "dialectically," this temporary *quantitative* increase, due to the elevation of norms of behavior as the society approaches communism, will involve the corrective participation of ever greater numbers of citizens, resulting eventually in the *qualitative* transformation of the character both of Soviet law and of the citizens themselves.

Coercion with a Sugar Coating

Together with the increased emphasis on popular self-regulation through public organizations, there has been a notable change of emphasis in the depiction of the roles of the regular police and courts, about which a word must be said. Though the call for public order still uses the time-worn slogans exhorting "vigilance," reminiscent of the coercive excesses of the past, an effort has been made to project to the public a new image of the instruments of coercion—notably the secret police—as organs rather of prevention and persuasion, as friends and helpers of the populace. Thus the KGB, for example, is portrayed as playing a passive yet important role in guiding the new course of social justice, through propaganda which stresses its cooperation and assistance to the comrades' courts and the peoples' militia. Its present work, as *Kommunist* describes it, is primarily "prophylactic," symbolizing the enlightened dictatorship's efforts gradually to alter the coercion-persuasion ratio in society.[38] As one Soviet writer has expressed this aspect of the current line:

> **The agencies of coercion are still necessary for guarding the nation from the intrigues of the imperialistic forces and their agents, also for protecting the lawful interests of the citizens, and for carrying on the struggle against antisocial parasitical elements, speculators, hooligans, and other criminals. Still, one cannot fail to note that the trends in the activities of the agencies of coercion are changing. . . . The sphere of coercion, which had never been the chief method in the activities of the socialist state, is now being narrowed down still further. The activities of such agencies as the police are being more and more closely combined with the activities of people's militia and are gradually acquiring a more social character. The development of the courts is proceeding . . . along the lines of combining their work with the activities of comrades' courts and the more extensive recruitment of the public into the administration of justice. The punitive measures applied by the courts are acquiring an ever-increasing educational character. . . . Of course, all this does not mean that coercion is already dying out. However, . . . direct administrative coercion is being replaced to an ever greater extent by other forms of economic, political and moral action.[39]**

The Control of Mass Control

The last sentence quoted, and its key word, "replaced," provide an apt point from which to summarize what is really happening in the Soviet Union today. The transfer of certain functions from the coercive apparatus of the regime to public organizations in no way means a lessening of social controls in Soviet society; on the contrary, it constitutes an effort to penetrate more deeply than ever before into the private and personal spheres of people's lives. The latest experiment in mass control is being conducted without the instrument of active police terror used in the past; but in spite of all the emphasis on persuasion, the aim of this experiment has been defined by the last-quoted writer, in a phrase borrowed from Lenin, as the development of a *"machinery capable of coercing"* in place of one "applying legal norms ensured by the coercive force of the state."[40]

Claims of current progress in this vast experiment have been buttressed with statistics asserting a 20.6 percent decrease in the number of crimes in 11 months of the year 1959 over the comparable period in 1958.[41]

[38] N. Mironov, "State Security is A Cause of All the People," *Kommunist* No. 11, 1960, pp. 39-48.
[39] P. S. Romashkin, "The Role of Persuasion and Coercion in the Soviet State," *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo,* No. 2, 1960.
[40] *Ibid.* Lenin's italics.
[41] R. A. Rudenko, "The Tasks of Further Strengthening Socialist Legality . . . ," *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo,* No. 3, 1960.

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For the RSFSR, the largest Soviet republic, the decline of convictions during the first nine months of 1959 over 1958 was broken down as follows: for hooliganism, 10.9 percent less; for petty theft of public property, 14.2 percent less; and for thefts of private property, 19.7 percent less.[42] While these figures presumably were intended to convey the impression of a marked improvement in mass social behavior, logic suggests that they are simply the inevitable statistical consequence of the transfer of functions from the regular courts and police to the public organizations, coupled with the "chase for favorable statistics" which accompanies any major program launched by the leadership.

It is clear, furthermore, that the current effensive is moving forward under the strict control of the ruling party, as the "leading and guiding force in all state and social organizations." Thus the party leadership, and at the apex Khrushchev himself, has operated through the CPSU proper and the traditional coercive apparatus to set clear limits on the pace and scope of public mobilization. The fact that the party leadership seems presently secure in its control, however, only underscores the continuing dilemma which confronts it, namely: too much intervention from above could ruin the desired initiatives from below, while too little involves the risk that compromise and leniency might lead the experimental social controls in the direction of anarchy.

Expanding Struggle?

This pressure on the regime to maintain a dynamic equilibrium in its course has been expressed in the theory, supported by some political analysts, that the Soviet party leadership must conduct a constant "revolution from above" in order to maintain and justify its power. The same idea has been offered by Milovan Djilas in the remark, "Communist regimes are a form of latent civil war between the government and the people."[43] In terms of this generalization, the early battles of the present phase of "struggle" seemed to be directed only against a minority element of errant or noncooperative citizens, the "parasitical" flotsam of society. Thence the offensive was expanded into a general mobilization of the public for the fulfillment of official goals. In the course of recent theoretical comment, there have been indications that the regime's "civil war" will in time be extended to still another target—in a battle, necessary sooner or later, against remaining forms of private property. The implications for the future in this respect emerge most clearly in a recent comprehensive essay on the coming society by the noted Soviet economist, S. Strumilin:

Insofar as communism eliminates the property which divides people, it liquidates that basis from which all property crimes and most other violations arise. The public opinion of commune members will be sufficiently strong to exclude practically all other crimes in time. At the same time, therefore, there will be less and less need, and finally none at all, for penal justice and police, courts and prisons, . . . and all other professional agents of justice. Moreover, the entire criminal code will become superfluous. . . . After the liquidation of private property the norms of civil law will also be superfluous. The same fate will befall, one after another, the various sectors of state institutions and law.[44]

Clearly discernible in Strumilin's vision of the "brave new world" is the thesis that private property, not only as a form of ownership of the means of production, but also in the form of personal possessions is, under socialism, the root of the "vestiges of the past" which must still be eradicated before the new Soviet man can emerge in his pristine form and the state can wither away. By the logic of this argument, the regime must at some point make an attempt to abolish private personal property, affecting most direly and directly the upper strata of Soviet society—the "haves" in a predominantly "have-not" society.

Supporting this trend of theory, there has been some recent stress in the popular press on the evils of private property. The reaction of those who see themselves threatened by such propaganda is cogently expressed in the letter of a man who identified himself with the words, "my address . . . any house on any street":

. . . Allow me to ask the editorial staff the following question: does it know that this bourgeois, or rather many millions of those bourgeois whom it attacks so vehemently, have fought against autocracy, . . . have helped to overcome the chaos and continue to carry on their shoulders all the hardships of development—without receiving any compensation for these titanic achievements. . . . As for myself I can say: I would be, in the opinion of Likhodeyev [author of the article under criticism] a bourgeois, because I have 12,000 rubles in my savings account. I want to own an automobile and a dacha. I do not consider this to be shameful. But this did not prevent me from suffering hunger and defending my country and carrying on my shoulders all the Five-Year Plans.[45]

[42] Figures cited at the Plenary Session of the Supreme Court of the RSFSR, December 1959; as quoted in R. Schlesinger, "Social Law I," *Soviet Studies*, July 1960, p. 81, footnote 28.
[43] M. Djilas, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
[44] S. Strumilin, "The Workday and Communism," *Novy mir*, No. 7, 1960.
[45] *Literaturnaia gazeta*, Sept. 3, 1960; the letter is in criticism of an article by L. Likhodeyev, "The Grimace of a Petit Bourgeois," *ibid.*, July 30, 1960.

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Despite their certain unpopularity in some quarters, the possibility that the incipient steps of an offensive against personal property may not be too far off seems indicated by the recent revelation in the party's leading theoretical journal (as reported in *Izvestia*), that "in accordance with the proposals of toilers, the construction of individual dachas and the development of individual plots is considered to be inexpedient"; ambiguous as this wording may be, it portends some form of new restrictions in a crucial area of property rights.[46] Thus, behind the smoke screen of popular participation, the public organizations may be pushed forward not only toward a new form of dispensation of justice, but toward a new redistribution of property. How extensive the latter is to be will largely determine the harshness of the former.

The Present and the Future

In the largest sense, the regime's "civil war" might be viewed as a struggle against the common citizen, in the demands that he continue to make economic sacrifices and strive to improve his attitudes for the sake of the bright future ahead.

The vision of this future depicts an ideal society in which the new Communist man, guided by the leaders of the ruling party, will enjoy the fruits of abundance produced by an "association of free individuals," for whom useful work has become a necessity of life, for whom the interests of the collective have been recognized as superior to those of the individual, for whom possession of private property has become meaningless. Yet for the outside observer, probably no more than for the Soviet citizen, the utopian aspects of this blueprint for the future are hard to reconcile with the picture of the present as it emerges from the pages of the Soviet press. In particular, the economic drive now being waged under the slogan, "Who does not work, does not eat," constitutes a mocking negation of the predicted emergence of a whole society of "new Soviet men." A leading Soviet theoretician has attempted to deal with this issue in Marxist terms:

Despite the connection and mutual relationship between the material and moral foundations of communism, the former develop more quickly than the latter. . . . We will in the near future attain the abundance and surplus of many consumer goods which are necessary for distribution according to scientifically fixed norms. A much more difficult matter, which will take much more time, will be to form in every member of society the inner necessity to work in a Communist manner and to make work the first necessity of life for each.[47]

In sum, while the Soviet leadership claims to have made decisive progress toward producing the material abundance essential to the Marxian vision of society, it has by its own admission only begun to approach the problem of producing the ideal citizens equally necessary to that society—an infinitely more complicated task inherited from the past.

Stated in another way, the problem initially posed by Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* was how to replace the coercive instruments of the state with a rational social order in which "the free development of each [individual] is the condition for the free development of all." Lenin grappled with this problem for a brief moment only; the barren fruit of his effort was anarchy, poverty, and the Chekist terror of war communism. Stalin's approach to the problem—justifying maximum coercion and terror as means to the end of the eventual withering away of the coercive apparatus—made a travesty of the original Marxian concept. Today under Khrushchev, another effort has been launched to actualize this concept, through a mobilization of citizens which stresses the desired "development of each" as the prerequisite for the desired "development of all."

According to Khrushchev, the present program for constructing communism ultimately will lead not only to the transformation of the individual citizen and of the social order, but to the total substitution of persuasion for coercion in society. Yet these aims of the future are to be pursued through the control mechanisms and methods of the present: the ruling party will continue to exercise its supreme authority over the populace through a coercive apparatus which has been de-emphasized but which remains in ready reserve if needed; moreover, the party will use its monopoly of control over mass organizations and mass media in a frank attempt to narrow down what latitude of free choice remains in the personal lives and behavior of Soviet citizens.

Given the present nature of the party dictatorship, the vision of a future society where persuasion and sweet reason reign supreme must be dismissed as utopian nonsense at best, political cynicism at worst. In no sense, however, is this to write off as meaningless the *relative* shift of emphasis away from coercion and toward persuasion in current Soviet policy. Whether or not the population believes in the promises of the Communist future, it well remembers the purgatory of

[46] *Kommunist* No. 14, 1960, p. 18; *Izvestia,* Oct. 16, 1960. The *Izvestia* article further suggests the disappearance of private housing and supports Khrushchev's idea of car pools as the means to provide automobiles under communism.

[47] Ts. Stepanyan, *op. cit.;* see also S. Strumilin, *op. cit.*

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the Stalinist past. Popular relief over the retreat from Stalinist coercion has been manifest in the greater measure of support accorded to the present regime, and the leadership is not likely to risk dissipating this feeling by a return to past excesses. The dividends accruing to the regime as a result of its greater emphasis on persuasive methods, coupled with its greater attention to consumer needs, have so far considerably outweighed any potential dangers to its power. Short of a serious crisis, then, the gauges on the regime's control machinery may be expected to continue veering toward persuasion rather than coercion. The total pressure on the population will be no less, but to the extent the regime can effectively substitute "social" controls through the new public organization for the traditional controls of the past, it will do so. At the same time, since the apparatus of power will remain at the disposal of the regime, we may expect to see a further development *not* towards a new genre of "totalitarianism without coercion," but towards a totalitarianism in which the latent threat of coercion remains the main source of the effectiveness of persuasion.

WATCH THY NEIGHBOR

A conference of personnel of the prosecutor's office and the militia and of people's judges and members of the Moscow Young Communist League *aktiv* was held recently in the editorial offices of *Komsomolskaia pravda.* It discussed what should be done to strengthen the fight against idlers, loafers, parasitic elements and people who consciously avoid labor. The speakers advanced a number of suggestions and recommendations on what courses of action are necessary if the fight against idlers and loafers is to become more effective and is to achieve its goal of making it really hot for the loafers.

"I believe that the fight against idlers and loafers is a very important and timely question," Comrade Paskov, Proletarian Borough Prosecutor, said in his speech. "We encounter parasitic elements every day. There are also deliberate loafers among young people. And although these people clearly violate the principle of our society, 'He who does not work shall not eat,' we often have no effective means to make them work.

"The loafers take advantage of every loophole to avoid control. It is known, for instance, that the militia keeps a close watch on those people who deliberately avoid working. The loafers use deception. They work somewhere for two or three days, get a job reference and start the old life over again. We must stop up every crevice in which the loafers try to hide. It would be legitimate, therefore, to set up comrades' courts under apartment house administrations as well, so that they could deprive deliberate loafers and speculators of the chance to live in the big cities." . . .

"It is undoubtedly necessary to improve the work of the comrades' courts and apartment house committees," said Comrade Lvov, Lenin Borough Assistant Prosecutor. "This is very important. Who knows better how a person behaves and whether he works or not than the neighbors, the apartment house manager and the yard man? The comrades' courts and apartment house administrations should be granted definite powers and the right to submit to the borough Soviets the question of applying administrative sanctions against loafers, so that the latter will understand that society does not take a tender attitude toward their parasitism and antisocial behavior."

—*Komsomolskaia pravda*, Aug. 28, 1960.

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The Outlook for the Soviet Consumer

By William N. Turpin

MR. KHRUSHCHEV HAS repeatedly promised the Soviet people the highest standard of living in the world. Nor is it the first time that such grandiose promises have been made by a Soviet leader. In 1931, Stalin declared: "In a period of ten years at the outside, we must cover the distance which separates us from the most advanced capitalist countries. We have all the objective possibilities for this."[1] But whereas Stalin's assertion of nearly three decades ago—with good reason—was not taken seriously, this is far from true of Khrushchev's declarations today. Western experts nowadays are no longer inclined to scoff at Soviet economic claims; in fact, many of them take the view that Khrushchev's promise of a vastly improved Soviet standard of living is susceptible of at least some measure of fulfillment. Nor is there much evidence of skepticism among them about the genuineness of the current Soviet program for reducing the workweek, notwithstanding the fact that from 1927 up till World War II the seven-hour day and five-day week were the legal Soviet norm, yet apparently were never really put into effect.[2]

There were real as well as artificial reasons for the minimization of Stalin's earlier claims. In 1931, the industrialization of the Soviet Union had only just begun. At the same time, although Tsarist Russia in 1917 had by no means been an "underdeveloped" country in the now fashionable sense of the term, the impression was created abroad that the Soviet regime had inherited a country much less advanced than it actually was—the probable explanation for this being that admirers of the new order had an interest in overemphasizing the "backwardness" of the old, while its opponents on the other hand were just as eager to exaggerate any signs of lagging economic progress. The upshot in any case was that Soviet claims in the period of the early Five-Year Plans were viewed against a background a shade darker, perhaps, than objectivity justified. Even so, the achievements of these years certainly made more impressive statistics than tangible exhibits of material progress. In fact, much the same could still be said today from the viewpoint of the ordinary Soviet citizen, for the concrete evidences of Soviet attainment are more apparent in outer space than on the streets of Lugansk or Kemerovo.

In contrast to the 1930's, however, Soviet economic achievements today are invested with a new aura of certainty. This is due, in large part, to the fact that Western scholars, on the basis of exhaustive analysis and a suitable discounting of Soviet statistical claims, have come up with what they believe to be fairly accurate estimates of actual Soviet production. Many laymen are familiar with published estimates placing current Soviet GNP (gross national product) at about 40-45 percent of the US figure, although few perhaps bother to find out precisely what this means. One detailed US study on this subject in 1959 estimated Soviet GNP for 1955 at 26.8 percent of the American when both were calculated in rubles, and at 53.4 percent when both were measured in dollars; then, taking the geometric average of these two, the author suggested that the resultant figure of 37.8 percent was "about right" as a measure of

[1] J. Stalin, *Voprosy leninizma*, (11th ed.), Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1952, p. 363.

[2] I. Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed*, London, 1959, p. 363. But see also *Sobranie zakonov i rasporyazhenii* (Collection of Laws and Decrees), Administration of the Council of Peoples' Commissars of the USSR and the Council of Labor and Defense, Moscow, 1927, p. 1195, and 1929, p. 77. The law was apparently never carried into effect and is not included in *Sbornik zakonodatelnikh aktov o trude* (Collection of Legislative Acts on Labor), 2nd ed., Gosiurizdat, Moscow, 1958, which however contains excerpts from the law of June 26, 1940, establishing the eight-hour day and seven-day workweek (p. 97).

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the relative size of the two economies.[3] On the basis of such complex calculations, it has been widely accepted that the Soviet rate of economic growth is faster than the American.

The Question for the Future

Although there would appear to be reasons for doubting the precision of these and other estimates of Soviet economic performance, few students of the subject today would dispute the capability of the Soviet economy to turn out a large and increasing volume of goods and services. Consequently, recent discussion of the Soviet economic future has tended to focus on such questions as whether a "Communist welfare state" is taking shape, and if so, why; and what effects a rising standard of living is likely to have on the social structure, future economic growth, and foreign policy of the Soviet Union.[4] In all this discussion, it seems to be taken for granted that, if the standard of living continues to rise, the Soviet economy must necessarily develop along lines roughly similar to those already traced by the economy of the United States and now being followed by other economies entering a "mass-consumption" phase.

In the author's view, there are good reasons for questioning this assumption—reasons which suggest that the picture of the future "Communist" society actually envisioned by the Soviet leaders is very different from the one just outlined. The present article proposes to examine these reasons and, on the basis of this analysis, to construct a speculative picture of what the Soviet leaders are likely to have in mind. It goes without saying that the picture cannot be considered an infallible blueprint of the future, but at least it may come nearer to the truth than a picture based on a simplistic and unwarranted projection of Western modes.

First, it must be made plain that to deny that the Soviet rulers are heading toward a "mass consumption society" in the Western sense is not to hold that they are deliberately denying the Soviet population the fruits of the last forty years of sacrifice. While it would be difficult on the other hand to demonstrate that those who make the important decisions in Soviet society are moved by any profound concern for the well-being and happiness of the masses, there is no need to assume that they are hostile in principle to improvement of the standard of living. Even if they were, the importance of a higher Soviet living standard from the standpoint of winning the battle for influence over the uncommitted nations is too obvious to permit the Soviet leaders to be indifferent to it. Conceding this point, one is still justified, however, in posing the question of whether either the Soviet leaders' notions of the future, or their interests as practicing politicians, permit them to contemplate with equanimity the prospect of an American-style high-consumption society.

It is perhaps surprising that the basic Marxist texts are so hazy regarding the attributes of the new society which eventually is to replace the bourgeois order. In fact, except for the famous sentence in the *Critique of the Gotha Program*,[5] the whole subject was carefully avoided, and speculation on it was labeled "unscientific" and "utopian"—both highly pejorative words in Marxist jargon.

Mr. Khrushchev has been equally chary of describing precisely the socio-economic pattern he envisions. While he has promised time and again that the Soviet Union will achieve the highest standard of living in the world, he has thus far specified only a campaign to surpass the United States in *per capita* production (not consumption) of milk, meat and butter. In regard to housing, his most definite and ambitious statement to date has been that it should be possible to abolish the present system of rationing within ten years. The only other indication he has given of his plans for the future of the Soviet consumer has been the negative—but quite significant—one that it will *not* include private automobiles.

Despite this reticence about the future, Soviet statistics indicate—and outside observers agree—that the standard of living of Soviet citizens is definitely improving. The pace is certainly not spectacular, and there is a great deal more emphasis on public than on private consumption, but no one is inclined to doubt that the living standard is rising steadily. What the author proposes to question, however, is simply the assumption that rising standards of consumption in the Soviet Union will take essentially the same form as in Western Europe or the United States.

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[3] Morris Bernstein, "A Comparison of Soviet and United States National Product", in *Comparisons of the United States and Soviet Economies*, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1959, Part II, p. 385.

[4] See the symposium, "Toward a 'Communist Welfare State'?", in *Problems of Communism*, No. 1 (January-February) 1960, pp. 1-22. The symposium includes a leading article by Alec Nove ("Social Welfare in the USSR") and commentaries by several other analysts of Soviet affairs.

[5] The sentence is a pithy, if not overly convincing, summary of what would transpire "in a higher phase of communist society," operating under the principle, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." See Lewis S. Feuer (ed.), *Marx and Engels—Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, Doubleday & Co., New York, 1959, p. 119.

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Since precise indications are lacking as to what the Soviet leaders mean when they speak of higher living standards, it may be helpful to approach the problem from a different angle. First, what features of a mass consumption society would the Soviet leadership be most likely to reject as incompatible with its objectives? Second, what alternative choices are open to them that would avoid these objectionable features and give the rising standards a form advantageous to the objectives of the regime?

Dangers of the Western Path

In the author's view, a development of the Soviet economy along Western-type mass consumption lines would give rise to two major problems of a socio-political nature and two others of a more directly economic character. Let us first consider the socio-political problems. Were the Soviet economy to develop in such a way as to encourage the citizen to become deeply absorbed in the acquisition and enjoyment of consumer goods, particularly of the durable variety, one result would very likely be the rapid growth of interests and preoccupations that would compete with—and, indeed, be detrimental to—the party's claims upon the citizen's time and attention.

Of course, it is true—or generally believed to be true—that certain kinds of consumer durables, in particular some of the modern mechanical appliances which have become standard appurtenances of the American home, free their possessors from domestic drudgery and thus create spare time for other pursuits. Then, there is another category of durables, including television sets, radios, phonographs, cameras, boats, sporting equipment, *etc.,* which give the owners something to do with their spare time. It could perhaps be argued that while the latter "time-filling" category of consumer goods (except for radios and television sets)[6] would doubtless be considered objectionable in the Soviet context because of the diversion of the citizen's attention from party programs, the "time-saving" variety on the other hand might well be regarded as advantageous since it would make more time available to be put to party use.

One answer to this argument is that, although the party would presumably favor giving the citizen more spare time to devote to party activities, there are other ways of achieving this which might be considered preferable to providing the population with labor-saving household equipment and appliances. Laundries and restaurants, for example, free more time from household chores than do washing-machines, stoves, and refrigerators—and the Soviet government has indeed already begun giving greater attention to such services.

A more cogent answer, however, is that the manner in which a given consumer durable is used—whether it fills or saves times—is less important than the place which consumer goods generally might come to occupy in the value-scheme and everyday attention of the Soviet citizen. The mere presence of a refrigerator in every Soviet kitchen obviously would not, in itself, threaten the party's monopoly over the minds of the people, but this monopoly *would* be threatened if the population at large came to concentrate the bulk of its desires, efforts and attention on the acquisition and enjoyment of all kinds of consumer goods. Observation of Western mass-consumption societies indicates that this whole process is intensely absorptive of people's time, thought, and effort—all of which, from the viewpoint of a Soviet *agitprop* or party official, would be much better devoted to activities in the service of party and state interests.

Another unpalatable consequence from the standpoint of the Soviet leadership would be the encouragement of private associations and social intercourse among Soviet citizens outside the control and surveillance of the party. Under present Soviet living conditions, easy social intercourse is hindered by several factors—the shortage of housing space and resultant limitations on privacy as well as on capacity to accommodate guests, the demands of housekeeping on the individual's time, and even the inadequacy of urban transportation facilities. As anyone who has visited a Soviet family can testify—and as Soviet housing statistics confirm—there is often hardly enough room to sit down. As to the other factors, one may cite a survey made by the Institute of Economics and Organization of Industrial Production of the Siberian Division of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, which shows that 3-5.5 hours per day of the worker's time are consumed by housekeeping chores (it is not specified whether this includes time spent in shopping for food, clothing, *etc.,* which often involves standing in queues), and another 1.5-2 hours per day in getting to and from work.[7]

Now, it is obvious that more adequate and better housing approaching modern Western standards and a

[6] Radio and television sets are a notable exception because of their obvious utility to the regime as instruments of propaganda indoctrination. This, plus the military desirability of building up a strong electronics industry, explains why these items have been relatively favored in Soviet production programs, making them the most readily available items in the consumer durables field.

[7] G. Prudenskii, "Sovershenstvovaniie organizatsii proizvodstva i problemy rabochevo vremeni" (Perfecting the Organization of Production and Problems of Working Time), *Voprosy ekonomiki* (Moscow), No. 1, 1960, p. 57.

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greater abundance of the other appurtenances of "gracious living", Western-style, would go a long way toward removing these hindrances. The effect of this would be to enable and even encourage Soviet citizens to develop spontaneous, uncontrolled private associations prejudicial to the party's dominant influence.

The Economic Aspect

So much for the probable impact of a mass-consumption type of society on the relationship of the Soviet citizen to the party and state. In addition to these sociopolitical consequences, what would be the effects of a transition to this kind of society on the Soviet industrial structure?

To begin with, the industrial apparatus which the Soviet Union has built at the cost of such enormous popular sacrifice is totally different from the industrial structures of the free economics, and developed in response to totally different stimuli. In these economies, money makes the mare go, in the sense that as consumer purchasing power it effectively commands the use of economic resources. Western politicians and economists may think of steel or electric power production as sources of military as well as economic strength, but the primary function of the economy is to produce consumer goods desired by the members of society. Heavy industry is built, not primarily because it is essential to national strength, but because its output is necessary to obtain a final product that people want and will buy. If the government wants military goods or the industrial plant to produce them, it cannot simply issue orders for them to be produced or built, but as a rule uses its fiscal powers to provide a consumption demand —that is, it acts as a customer. And when it does, rarely, enter the economy as a participant, it typically does so through a state corporation operating or trying to operate on regular business principles. Thus, the military potential developed by free economies has not come from a system specifically designed and directed to produce it; rather it has been, basically, an unintentional by-product.

The Russian and Soviet path of development has been entirely different. Even before 1917—indeed, dating back as far as Peter the Great—industrial development in Russia received its main impetus from the state and was directed toward building national military power.[8] The subsequent erection of the Communist economic system, with the state itself becoming the direct organizer and operator of all productive activity, accentuated the conscious channeling of economic development along military lines. This was especially conspicuous during the period of forced industrialization under Stalin, but it has continued to hold true under his successors, as evidenced by the fact that Soviet writers, in listing the objectives of state economic planning, habitually put the strengthening of the "national defense capability" first—and the elevation of living standards far down the list. (Small wonder that so much of the Soviet economic vocabulary is military—brigade, target, storming, battle, objective, *etc.*) It is this longstanding military orientation of Soviet economic policy which has dictated the priority expansion of heavy capital-goods industry, determining the present structure of the Soviet industrial apparatus.

Given this apparatus as it now stands, the Soviet Union, in order to produce consumer goods in substantially greater quantity, would have to do one of two things, or a combination of both. Although steel admittedly can be used to make either producers' or consumer goods, the existing machinery that was designed to produce heavy industrial equipment cannot readily be used to produce anything else. Consequently, if it were decided to greatly expand the production of consumer durables, either a part of the existing Soviet industrial plant now being used to make investment goods would have to be re-equipped and converted for this purpose, or a large increment of new plant specifically designed to manufacture consumer durables would have to be built onto the present industrial structure. Such a process would take time, but it cannot be ruled impossible *a priori* for a command economy which, by definition, is capable of making even drastic changes by central decision. But what would these alternatives entail? The conversion of existing heavy industrial facilities would mean reducing the existing capacity to produce capital goods; and the diversion of new investment into the consumer goods sector would cut down, or prevent altogether, the further growth of the capital goods industry.

It is totally inconceivable that either of these choices, or a combination of them, would be palatable to the Soviet leadership, for the simple reason that their effects would negate the central, undeviating objective of all past Soviet economic policy—the continuous expansion of heavy industrial and military power. There is no evidence whatever to suggest that the Soviet leaders have the slightest intention of sacrificing this objective for the sake of the Soviet consumer. Moreover, were they suddenly to reverse the whole pattern of Soviet economic development, this might well cause many Soviet citizens to question whether the former course was really deter-

[8] *Cf.* P. I. Lyashchenko, *History of the National Economy of Russia*, trans. by L. M. Herman, Macmillan, New York, 1949, pp. 266, 284, 408.

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mined—as they had been told—by the "objective economic laws" of socialism.

There is a second economic consideration which would further militate against Soviet willingness to permit the emergence of a mass-consumption economy. It is that the direct economic costs involved in effecting the conversion and/or expansion of the productive apparatus to permit a greatly increased output of consumer durables would not be the only costs. There would also have to be auxiliary investments in order to make these goods more widely usable. How many Soviet apartment buildings or houses, for example, are wired heavily enough at present to permit the use of a number of electrical household appliances? How many new power stations would have to be built if, as in the US, 27 percent of total electricity output were required just to meet residential consumption demand?[9] (Soviet statistics include domestic electricity consumption in a single figure covering "municipal and agricultural" use, which still amounts to only 15.5 percent of total Soviet power output.) How many miles of new highways, how many more gasoline stations, repair shops, and hotels, would be needed to serve a public on wheels? And what of the problem of supplying spare parts for a vastly increased volume of mechanical gadgets, when already frequent complaints in the Soviet press attest that even now this problem is not being effectively dealt with?

The Soviet Alternative

There are, then, both socio-political and economic reasons militating against the conscious creation of a mass-consumption society in the USSR. But, if this is the case, what alternative form is the rise in the Soviet standard of living so often and unequivocally promised by Khrushchev likely to take?

There is no sure answer, but some plausible hypotheses may be offered. In the first place, within the limits imposed by the socio-political and economic considerations outlined in the preceding sections, there is every reason to believe that it is the Soviet intention to bring about some measure of further improvement in living standards, in the strictly material sense, through continuation of a controlled and highly selective expansion of consumer goods production, consumer services, and housing. Beyond this, however, Khrushchev's promised higher living standard seems most likely to take the form, not of great material abundance, but of greater "leisure" for the Soviet working population, to be filled by participation in various kinds of civic projects and organized cultural and recreational activities. Aside from the current Soviet program for reducing the workweek, there are other reasons which support this hypothesis.

In particular, "controlled leisure" holds definite appeal for a party which aspires to create the "new Soviet man" and to make every citizen a public servant in the "stateless" Communist utopia of the future. For if working hours are shortened, the citizen will have more "spare time" which the party can then mobilize for the purpose of manning the "comrades' courts," the "volunteer militia," and other as yet unformed "public organizations" which, Khrushchev has intimated, will gradually supplant the existing state machinery as the "transition to communism" progresses. The party could also call upon the citizen to perform "voluntary" spare-time work on civic improvement projects, in scrap collections, and even communal housing construction. If doctrinal authority is needed to show that this would accord with the Communist conception of the ideal society, one may cite Lenin's statement in 1919 defining communism as "a system under which people become accustomed to the performance of public duties without any specific machinery of compulsion, when unpaid work for the public good becomes the general phenomenon."[10]

There is evidence, also, that Khrushchev's version of the world's "highest standard of living" is more cultural than material: rather than corrupt the citizen's sense of values by giving him too many material comforts, grant him more leisure for cultural activities and recreation of a type approved by the party. A hint that something like this may be the party leaders' intention was given in a recent article in *Kommunist,* which said:

> **. . . the gradual shortening of the working day carried out by the party and the government has great consequences for the life of the Soviet family. . . . In consequence [of the shortening], the forms of using free time will be perfected also, and the life of the family will be ever more closely connected with the work of clubs, libraries, sporting organizations, creative artistic collectives.[11]**

Labor Shortage or Unemployment?

To digress for a moment, it may seem curious that the Soviet leaders should be talking about, and indeed executing, a reduction in the workweek at a time when

[9] See "Relative Water and Power Resources Development in the USSR and the USA," Report to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs and Public Works, US Senate, US Government Printing Office, Washington D. C., 1960, pp. 14-15, and comments on p. 18.

[10] V. I. Lenin, *Sochineniia* (4th ed.), Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1950, Vol. 30, p. 260.

[11] A. Kharchev, "Semia i kommunizm" (The Family and Communism), *Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 7, 1960, p. 61.

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many Western observers have been claiming that the USSR faces a serious labor shortage. One is tempted to suspect, in the light of the conspicuously low productivity of Soviet industrial and agricultural labor, that the Kremlin leadership may, in fact, be confronted by the more serious problem—especially over the medium term—of what to do with workers who are not really needed on their jobs and who are being and will be increasingly displaced as the Soviet drive to step up production efficiency and automation progresses.

Comparisons of labor productivity in different countries are notoriously difficult to calculate accurately, but even Soviet statistics—hardly designed to put the USSR in a bad light—generally confirm that the number of workers employed in Soviet industry substantially exceeds the number employed in American plants for the same amount of output. One Soviet economist estimates the productivity of labor in Soviet metallurgy, for example, at only 60 percent of the level in the American industry despite an allegedly higher Soviet output from "basic technological aggregates"—*i.e.,* blast furnaces, open hearths, and rolling mills. He further indicates that Soviet machine-building plants, also representing a relatively advanced sector of Soviet industry, use 50 percent more workers per unit of equipment than do American, although it is not specified whether this figure is based on comparable sizes and types of equipment.[12] That these figures, if anything, grossly exaggerate relative Soviet labor productivity is indicated by the findings of qualified American observers who have visited Soviet plants: the latter generally agree that the numerical ratio of Soviet to American workers employed per unit of output is about 4:1—despite the fact that the plants visited were presumably the most advanced show-places of Soviet industry.

Other evidence could be cited from Soviet publications to show that Soviet enterprises generally keep on their payrolls substantial numbers of non-productive workers—*e.g.,* the employment of one inspector for every five workers in many plants[13]—or are often obliged to use inordinate numbers of workers for certain tasks because of poor organization and lack of mechanization.[14] Hence it is not surprising that, according to an article in *Kommunist,* a number of Soviet plants have already cut back to a seven-hour day without being obliged to increase their labor forces as much as anticipated.[15]

This sort of "disguised unemployment" is even more striking in Soviet agriculture. Khrushchev himself has cited figures which, even though "adjusted," indicate that Soviet collective farms use 16 times the labor employed on American farms for equivalent output. Unadjusted, the ratio would be 20 to 25 times.[16]

The significance of all this is that, as the Soviet Union executes its declared intention to raise labor productivity through more efficient organization and improved technology, it may be hard put to find alternative employment for the workers displaced. The most modern techniques of producing those goods in which the Soviet authorities are most interested are, as a rule, techniques that require more capital and less labor per unit of output. Every advanced industrial society has of course experienced this problem of technological unemployment, but in the West it has presented itself in piecemeal, gradual fashion, usually affecting one industrial sector at a time and thus making the process of adjustment easier. What the Soviet Union faces today, however, is technological unemployment on an economy-wide scale as a result of a sharp, across-the-board rise in industrial and agricultural production efficiency approaching Western levels.

In addition to this, labor is no more mobile in the Soviet Union than is capital. Not only does rural labor have to be trained, relocated, and provided with housing and related facilities if it is to be employed in industry, but the same problems arise if displaced industrial workers are to be shifted to a new field of activity. They also have to be provided with the necessary capital equipment—new factories, tools, and machinery—and their needs thus come into competition with other, already exigent demands. Soviet resources as it is are so strained by the heavy industrial requirements of the Seven-Year Plan that investment in key industries is already running behind schedule.

These problems can, of course, be gradually worked out over the long run, but for the medium term—say the next five to ten years—a reduction of working hours would seem to offer an easier solution than would

[12] S. Kheinman, "Nekotorye ekonomicheskie problemy organizatsii promyshlennovo proizvodstva" (Some Economic Problems of the Organization of Industrial Production), *Voprosy ekonomiki,* No. 1, 1960, p. 37.

[13] V. Babushkin and B. Miroshnichenko, "Za berezhlivost i ekenomiiu v narodnom khoziaistve" (For Care and Saving in the Economy), *Kommunist,* No. 7, 1960, p. 46.

[14] I. Kobylyakov and V. Sholokh, "Reservy uvelicheniia proizvodstva chernykh metallov v Dnepropetrovskom ekonomicheskom administrativnom raionie" (Reserves for Increasing the Production of Ferrous Metals in the Dnepropetrovsk Economic Administrative Region), *Planovoye khoziaistvo* (Moscow), No. 2, 1960, p. 95.

[15] B. Sukharevski, "Rabochii den i zarabotnaia plata v SSSR" (The Working Day and Wages in the USSR), *Kommunist,* No. 3, 1960, p. 25.

[16] D. Gale Johnson and Arcadius Kahan, "Soviet Agriculture: Structure and Growth," in *Comparisons . . ., op. cit.,* II, p. 215.

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the multiplication of capital (both productive and social) necessary to keep the labor force fully employed. Such considerations as these may well be a factor underlying the current Soviet move toward a shorter workweek. However, this does not detract from the main thesis of the present paper, namely, that a reduction of working hours, giving the mass of Soviet citizens more "leisure" time to be devoted to party-prescribed activities, probably figures as an essential element in the peculiar kind of higher living standard which the Soviet leaders contemplate in preference to the material abundance of the American-type mass-consumption society.

The Transition to Communism

One final question remains to be considered. Assuming this hypothesis to be correct, what implications does it have from the standpoint of the theoretical prerequisites for achieving the transition to communism? Soviet ideologists can, of course, quote Marx and Lenin on the conditions of labor and leisure under communism in order to maintain that shorter working hours represent an important step towards final realization of the Communist millenium.[17] At the same time, however, it must not be overlooked that Communist theory has always inextricably linked the attainment of communism with the notion of a prior surplus of goods. Thus, the standard Soviet doctrinal textbook, *Political Economy,* states:

Communism is a social structure under which there are no classes or class differences, all the means of production constitute all-national property, *the level of productive forces secures a surplus of products,* and the ruling principle of social life is the principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need" (italics added).[18]

Some authorities on the USSR (Mr. Peter Wiles, for example) foresee that distribution according to need in the Soviet Union will probably start with free "tram rides and bread." Obviously, there are a number of

[17] Sukharevski, *op. cit.,* p. 23.
[18] *Politicheskaia ekonomika* (2nd ed.), Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1952, p. 373.

The Uses of Leisure . . .

The granting of increased leisure, according to the logic of totalitarian rule, must be accompanied by heightened efforts to control the uses of leisure. There must be both positive and negative control, and both are becoming quite noticeable in today's Moscow as the citizenry is accorded more free time and more variegated ways of enjoying it. Negatively, temptations to "abuse" leisure are being removed. The price of vodka has gone up and the famous rule limiting each customer to 100 grams (less than one-quarter pint) is being enforced in restaurants. Most of Moscow's beer parlors, where all that the clientele were really interested in was finding a place to sit down and illegally consume hip-flask vodka after tipping the waitress into silence, have been closed. When I was last in Moscow in the summer of 1959, the habitués of the pool-hall operating in a basement in Gorky Park—and boasting a bouncer, sub rosa *gambling, and, I was assured, fixed matches—were sure that the days of their unique emporium were limited. These may be especially colorful examples of negative control, but they are symptomatic.*

Positively, there have also been changes to meet the problem of leisure. The newspapers, led by Azhubei's Komsomolskaia Pravda *and now* Izvestia, *have been brightened to attract more readers. This does not mean, as the Central Committee resolution on propaganda (Jan. 10, 1960) made clear, that the* agitprop *functions of the mass media are to be lessened. Just the reverse. The media must be made more palatable* and *more ideological in order to attract readers and enlighten them.*

Then, there is a new trend in favor of building one's own cottage. Do-it-yourself, as all Americans well know, is the epitome of constructive leisure. And how much more marvelous when it helps solve a desperate housing shortage! But, as a moment's reflection on the history of the peasants' private garden plots will suggest, there are risks involved, and the regime has been proceeding very cautiously in this area. Public housing projects are less dangerous, and many Muscovites are now using their leisure time to build cooperative apartment buildings under the auspices of the trade unions and city

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such commodities or services which, even if made free goods, would still be demanded in limited, predictable quantities, so that demand could be fully satisfied. On the other hand, in the commodity-starved Soviet consumer economy, there would be a much greater number of other things which, if made freely available to the public, would be demanded in far larger quantities than the economy could conveniently supply. But the achievement of full communism would logically require that the process of freeing commodities for distribution according to need continue, with the inevitable result that, as the process moved on from the lower to the higher ranges of the demand scale, serious difficulties would arise in meeting the demand for goods which the economy could not easily produce in sufficient quantity.

From everything that has been said in these pages about the basic orientation of the Soviet economy, it should be evident that the Soviet leaders would hardly relish this prospect any more than they would the emergence of a Western-style mass-consumption society. Therefore, while it is reasonable to anticipate a continued expansion of the free public welfare services to which Mr. Alec Nove has pointed[19]—and which are already distributed according to "Communist" principles—and while consumer goods will also probably become relatively more abundant as time goes on, it is difficult to see in this any imminent prospect of the speedy attainment of communism.

Needless to say, this picture of future Soviet development leaves little room for the kind of comforting thoughts entertained by those who anticipate the emergence of a mass-consumption society, with far-reaching impact upon Soviet internal and external policies. There is nothing in it to suggest a weakening of the party's role or any diminution of power-producing investment. It is, however, a picture that fits the Soviet book too well to be dismissed in favor of the bland assumption that forces beyond the Soviet leaders' control will compel them to move, willy-nilly, in the direction of a consumer-oriented society.

[19] See footnote 4.

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soviets. The apartments, of course, are turned over to the volunteer builders for their own occupancy.

Neighborhood improvement projects have much the same status and also attract a great deal of real enthusiasm. Soviet urban citizens often have a third-generation attitude of nostalgia toward their peasant origins and hence romanticize "the countryside" and "nature." Many of my Soviet acquaintances were willingly mobilized to plant flowers, transplant trees, and beautify the courtyards of their apartments. All this is sanctioned by the regime as collective endeavor and as a step, both psychologically and socially, toward communism. In the same way, the negative controls on leisure are designed to uproot the last "remnants of capitalist consciousness."

Finally, there is another category of measures, such as the creation of the "comrades' courts" and the "people's militia." These are not wholly dictated by ideology, not simply steps toward the eventual "withering away of the state," though they can be rationalized as such. They are really part of the effort to channel leisure into "constructive" activities and to control its "abuse." During my 1959 visit, I attended a pre-election meeting at which the representative from the Lenin raion *in the Moscow Soviet gave a report to his constituents on various neighborhood problems and programs. He spoke of the creation of the people's militia as a step toward communism, but he then went on to cite police statistics to show that the petty crime rate had dropped in areas where the militia was active. As he put it, "the policeman who has people's militiamen on his beat is a happy policeman."*

And then there were the Komsomol patrols at Moscow University, who had as one of their chief functions the enforcement of "culturedness" on the dance floor. This could perhaps be said to serve as training for the future Communist society, but in fact the patrols' real job was to discourage their fellow students from spending their leisure dancing to the rock-and-roll rhythm of Elvis Presley. Can the state wither away while "I'm Nothing But a Hound Dog" remains?

Jeremy R. Azrael

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The Current Status of the Soviet Worker

EDITORS' NOTE: In our July 1960 issue we published an article by Paul Barton dealing with post-Stalin developments in Soviet labor legislation. Mr. Barton's main conclusions—that the status of the worker in Soviet society remains largely unchanged, and that the exercise of repressive discipline is still the predominant factor in Soviet labor policy—as well as some of the specific points he made, evoked considerable interest among our readers. We have therefore invited three specialists in the Soviet labor field, Solomon M. Schwarz, Margaret Dewar and Emily Clark Brown, to comment on the issues raised by Mr. Barton. Their contributions, together with Mr. Barton's reply, follow.

Not Good—But Better

Emily Clark Brown

THE EXTENSIVELY DOCUMENTED article by Paul Barton [1] on the current status of the Soviet worker is impressive. But the author surprisingly omits much other evidence readily available in the periodicals he cited as well as in many current Soviet journals and papers, both professional and popular, in the labor field. Furthermore, many of his conclusions cannot be squared with information obtained by this writer in extensive interviews in the Soviet Union in 1955 and 1959.

Mr. Barton's chief conclusion, namely "that the status of the worker in Soviet society remains largely unchanged," is supported first by his claim "that the constraints on the mobility of labor are being diffused rather than significantly relaxed." This statement runs counter not only to all official statements of policy in recent years, but also to much concrete evidence. Thus, the leading Soviet expert on labor law, N. G. Aleksandrov, gives "genuine freedom of labor contract" as one of the basic principles of Soviet labor law, and defines it as embracing "strictly voluntary choice of employment, freedom to transfer to other work or to retain work at the worker's or employee's own wish, and the requirement that transfers to other permanent work be made only with agreement of the worker." [2] Conversations with Soviet citizens and other Soviet experts in 1959 conveyed the impression that this idea of workers' freedom is actually being practiced.

Mr. Barton's discussion of *orgnabor,* the organized recruitment of workers, and his use of the term "labor conscripts" may be based on a misinterpretation of the terms "direction to work" and "sending to jobs" which are still in general use in the USSR, but which in the context of post-Stalin life no longer mean conscription. *Orgnabor,* whatever it may have been at its inception in 1931, is not now and has not been for many years a system of labor conscription. Rather, on behalf of enterprises and construction projects, it recruits workers from agricultural areas and more recently also from the cities for jobs in distant regions; it signs contracts with the applicants setting forth the terms of employment, including defrayal of transportation costs and provision for training and housing on the new job. *Orgnabor* advertisements can be seen on street bulletin boards in every Soviet

[1] This journal, July-August, 1960, pp. 18-27.

[2] N. G. Aleksandrov, *Sovetskoe trudovoe pravo,* 1959, pp. 50, 52. Problems and methods used in the planned distribution of the labor force were discussed by the present writer in "The Soviet Labor Market", *Industrial and Labor Relations Review,* January 1957, pp. 179-200. A report on the 1959 field study appears in "The Local Union in Soviet Industry", *ibid.,* January 1960, pp. 192-215.

Professor Brown, who teaches at Vassar College (Poughkeepsie, New York), has long specialized in Soviet labor problems. Her articles in this field have appeared in the Industrial and Labor Relations Review *(Ithaca, New York), and other journals.*

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city. There is no evidence in the reports cited by Barton or elsewhere that anything but voluntary recruitment is involved.[3]

The extensive development of industry and agriculture in Siberia, Kazakhstan, and the Far East has necessitated the shift to those areas of hundreds of thousands of workers. Barton calls them "labor conscripts," but the shifts were and still are being achieved mainly through public appeals by the party and the Komsomol. All Soviet statements insist that this recruitment is carried out strictly on a volunteer basis, in response to public needs and to the incentives provided by the government.[4] There is little doubt, to be sure, that these mass movements have been activated by powerful social pressures to which all Soviet citizens, party and Komsomol members in particular, are extremely susceptible. "The call of the party," and not purely individual choice, is thus involved; but at the same time we should not underestimate the personal response of some of the youth and even older citizens to public appeals aimed at their patriotism and pioneering spirit. In any case, it is not justifiable to call the migrants "labor conscripts." [5]

OTHER QUESTIONS RAISED by Barton with regard to "the network of constraint entangling the Soviet worker", which he considers to be even tighter than in 1956, are more complicated. It is true that the worker still must have a labor book, a passport, and permission from the police to settle in any major city. Workers do still move, however, and turnover is still considered something of a problem. The 1956 decree which gave workers the right to change jobs on two weeks' notice had the limitation, as Barton notes, that such workers forfeited their record of continuous service, and especially the right to temporary disability benefits until they had worked six months on the new job. The law did, however, list acceptable reasons for leaving one's job, and in such cases the penalties did not apply. Moreover, the limitation was later modified and finally dropped completely. Since January 1, 1960, workers who change jobs have the right to temporary disability benefits regardless of their time on the new job, and they retain their record of "uninterrupted service" if they begin work again within one month.[6] Here is another evidence of the general trend toward more freedom in Soviet labor relations.[7]

Barton raises another interesting question in his discussion of economic pressures designed to influence workers against changing jobs. For example, he says a worker would lose the right to cultivate a plot of land assigned to him by his plant and thus would "automatically lose a substantial portion of his food supply." It is true that wage and salary workers in 1958-59 held nine-tenths of one percent of the entire sown area, and that they owned surprisingly large amounts of livestock—17.3 percent of all cows, 8.3 percent of all pigs, for example.[8] In some cases, then, the loss of the plots might be of importance, but with the increasing availability of food supplies, it is doubtful whether, for many workers in the larger cities, this could now be a major factor either in their food supply or in their employment decisions.

More serious might be the possibility of losing an apartment in a building under control of the plant.[9] The workers who obtain such apartments, however, are usually long-service workers who are less likely than others to wish to change jobs. The possibility of getting better housing by acquiring seniority is one of the factors counted on to promote stability. The general policy is to encourage stability by proper wage differentials, improvements in housing and working conditions, and other positive incentives, rather than by limiting the freedom of choice of occupations, either directly or indirectly.[10]

A few comments are also in order regarding Barton's discussion of labor discipline. He is correct as to

[3] Aleksandrov, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-86; 1954 ed., pp. 158-61; V. Moskalenko, "Problems of the Organized Recruitment of Workers," *Sotsialisticheskii trud,* No. 4, 1960, pp. 72-78. The one full discussion of *orgnabor,* by two officials of the Chief Administration for the Organized Recruitment of Workers, V. C. Andreev and P. A. Gureev, *Organizovannyi nabor rabochikh v SSSR,* 1956, says that planned distribution of the labor force is carried out "not at all by means of compulsory direction of workers to work. . . but on the basis of voluntary application of workers to work at specific enterprises, to fulfill specific work" (p. 7); and that fulfilling the plans for recruitment of workers depends not only on the work of *orgnabor* but also "on the willingness of citizens to conclude labor contracts, which is determined both by their individual aspirations, inclinations, their material self-interest, and by how the enterprises for which recruitment is being carried out recommend themselves" (p. 62).

[4] V. N. Yagodkin, "On the Planned Distribution of Social Labor," *Voprosy politicheskoi ekonomii,* University of Moscow, 1960, p. 76; N. G. Aleksandrov, "The Growing Construction of Communism and the Development of Soviet Labor Law," *Sovetskoe gosurdarstvo i pravo,* 1960, No. 1, p. 51.

[5] Less pressure seems to be exerted now even on graduates of technical and higher educational institutions to accept the jobs to which they had been "directed" upon graduation. This is supported by the latest legal discussion of the question, which indicates that enterprises may hire a young specialist without an order directing him to work, but only with a certificate granting him the opportunity to find his own job. Aleksandrov, *Sovetskoe trudovoe pravo,* 1959, p. 190. See also O. V. Smirnov, *Priem, uvolnenie i vostanovlenie na rabote,* 1958, pp. 17-19.

[6] *Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* February 24, 1960, p. 24; Aleksandrov, *Sovetskoe trudovoe pravo,* 1959, pp. 208-210; Smirnov, *op. cit.,* pp. 20-21.

[7] *Cf.* S. Schwarz, *Sotsialisticheskii vestnik,* February-March, 1960, p. 32.

[8] *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1958 godu,* pp. 396, 449-50.

[9] A 1957 regulation kept a provision for eviction of workers who left work of their own choice, or by dismissal, from houses owned by certain major enterprises. *Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* June 19, 1957, pp. 28-29.

[10] See I. Emelyanov, "To Every Enterprise—Stable Work Forces," *Sotsialisticheskii trud,* No. 10, 1958, pp. 28-34.

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the severity of labor discipline, which is enforced by administrative penalties and by educational work and social pressure organized by the party, Komsomol, and trade unions, including the "comrades' courts." According to law, however, a worker may not be discharged except by agreement with the trade union committee in the plant. Moreover, workers may appeal against any penalty —even one recommended by a comrades' court—first to the joint worker-management Commission on Labor Disputes in the plant, then directly to the factory committee of the union, and finally to the People's Court. The worker is thus hardly as defenseless against unjust discipline as Barton implies. There are, of course, severe criticisms in the press of cases in which workers have been discharged illegally, with or without agreement of the trade union committee; but in many such cases the workers are restored to their jobs by the courts.[11]

Another question worth considering in this context—and one which Barton disregards—is the effectiveness of the ceaseless party and trade union propaganda linking the welfare of the workers with their success in fulfilling production plans. It would not be surprising if many workers, mindful of the increase in real wages and the improvement in the supply of consumer goods and housing which have accompanied the notable growth of production during the past decade, did believe it to be to their own advantage to do all they can to contribute to the production success of their enterprise. It would be a mistake to disregard this feeling of common interest and, by the same token, to dismiss as ineffective in the enforcement of labor discipline the social pressure generated by the trade union bodies and the comrades' courts.

As to the trade unions, Barton holds that in spite of the 1958 law increasing the powers of factory trade union committees, these committees are subservient to management and impotent to protect the interests of workers. His evidence comes from the many newspaper stories criticizing trade union failures, which have recently been appearing in increasing numbers. On the other hand, Barton disregards the numerous published accounts of strong trade union committees and their successful work, as well as reports of how specific instances of failure to protect workers' rights were finally remedied by strong intervention from above, or by the election of new, more energetic union officers by the workers themselves. Evidently, even in a monolithic society, matters are not the same everywhere. The important factor is the present policy of encouraging the unions to act as effective representatives of their members and as guarantors of the legally established rights of the workers—always of course within the limits set by the party. Critical stories in the press are meant to promote this policy by stimulating the workers to demand its implementation by reluctant trade union officers and managers. In many if not all the plants visited by this writer in 1955 and 1959, the local union officers seemed to be vigorous, intelligent people who showed as strong a sense of responsibility for the welfare of the union members as they did in the task of carrying out party and government policy. Many of them, and many of the managers also, believed strongly that the increased authority of the trade unions was a real factor in the life and welfare of the plants and their workers.[12]

THE QUESTION remains, however, whether or not it is true that the function of the trade unions is primarily to promote the economic interests of the state rather than the welfare of the workers, and that, as Barton maintains, "their concern for the social welfare of the workers seems to be vanishing altogether." Plentiful evidence in official statements of policy does indeed indicate that "the central task of the trade unions" is to help bring about successful fulfillment of the Seven-Year Plan. But these statements, as well as numerous reports on union meetings at all levels published in *Trud* during recent months, also included demands for effective union work aimed at improvements in housing and the supply of consumer goods, betterment of working conditions, mechanization of heavy and dangerous jobs, diligent observance of safety laws, and strict protection of the rights of workers as established by law and collective contracts. In addition, numerous stories of managers penalized or removed on the demand of the trade unions have appeared in print[13] as well as reports of union officers displaced in elections of new committees for inadequate performance of their functions in protecting the workers' interests.[14] Clearly, then, the unions *are* substantially concerned with promoting the welfare of their members.

It is impossible, also, to agree with Mr. Barton's conclusion that the protection of workers' rights is being increasingly entrusted to the courts, rather than to the unions. In reality, it is the current policy to strengthen the protection of rights, first through increased powers for the local trade union committees, and then, as a second line of defense, by more prompt and effective court action on appeal.

Finally, Mr. Barton maintains that the Soviet experiments with union participation in management, especially through the "permanent production conferences", have been a failure. Again, his evidence comes exclusively from critical reports: all the criticisms he lists, and others, are to be found in published discussions. He ignores, however, many detailed press accounts of worker and trade union activity in promoting improvements in production, helping to reorganize work in preparation for the projected shift to a shorter work day, taking the initiative in helping lagging brigades, assisting in the

[11] For example, *Trud,* June 16, 1960, p. 2; *Sotsialisticheskaya zakonnost,* December 1959, pp. 20-22, as translated in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* February 24, 1960, pp. 24-25.

[12] See Brown, "The Local Union in Soviet Industry," *loc. cit.*

[13] For example, *Trud,* Feb. 14, 1960, p. 2; March 17, 1960, p. 2; July 9, 1960, p. 2.

[14] *Ibid.,* Oct. 3, 1959, p. 2; Feb. 13, 1960, p. 3; Apr. 6, 1960, p. 2; Apr. 23, 1960, p. 5.

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revision of norms and the reclassification of work and workers under the new wage schemes, engaging in competitions for the title of "Brigade of Communist Labor", and so on. Similarly, there have been many detailed reports of successful work by the production conferences, even in the journals which Mr. Barton cites. Thus, a major article in the popular trade union journal, *Sovetskie profsoyuzy,* reported that seven million members had been elected to the conferences and stated that these bodies "play a great role" in Soviet society as "one of the most effective forms of participation by working people in the administration of the national economy."[15] Similar attitudes on the part of plant managers and trade union officers were evident in most of the plants visited by the present writer a year ago.

In general, contrary to Mr. Barton's conclusion, the permanent production conferences have not taken over the functions of the trade unions. Operating under the control of the factory trade union committees, they provide a method of assuring serious and planned consideration of major problems, both at the shop and the all-plant level. In many cases, it was reported, not only the elected members but also large numbers of other workers attend sessions when the agenda includes questions of great interest such as the shift to the seven-hour day. It is true, on the other hand, that in many plants the permanent production conferences are functioning ineffectively or not at all; but the initial successes of the institution cannot be denied.

That ordinary workers take as much interest in production as Soviet spokesmen claim may be difficult to believe. But when workers have a direct financial incentive to increase production, as well as the prospect of a shorter work week as soon as their plant has achieved a sufficient increase in labor productivity—all this in addition to the evidence of rising standards of living in general—it would not be too surprising if considerable numbers of them believed that by cooperating in increasing production they benefit themselves as well as the state. The evidence of widespread cooperation, and even of a feeling of creative participation by many workers, cannot be disregarded, even though we do not know how general this feeling is.

ALL IN ALL, Mr. Barton's claim that "the status of the worker in Soviet society remains largely unchanged" is entirely too simple a summation of a highly complex situation. There are too many indications of increased freedom of action for individual workers as well as for their local unions to accept such a statement. The worker's position, to be sure, remains circumscribed by the fact that he lives in a Communist state where any decision to enlarge his freedom comes from the top and is made on the basis of production needs rather than in response to the demands of workers organized in independent labor unions. Nevertheless, with the rising level of education, a spirit of freedom among Soviet workers is beginning to assert itself, accompanied by signs of spontaneous action from below. At the same time, the party feels the need for tight control over basic policy at the top. How to reconcile these two antagonistic tendencies remains a dilemma which the Soviet leadership has yet to solve. It is to be hoped that as the delicate balance of "control from above and control from below" evolves further, Soviet workers will continue to gain both in their freedoms and in their material well-being.

[15] *Sovetskie profsoiuzy,* No. 8, 1960, pp. 42-43. V. I. Prokhorov, secretary of the Central Council of Trade Unions, reported in the same number (p. 14) that there had been 350,000 meetings of these conferences in the first half of 1959, that almost 1,380,000 proposals had been adopted (78 percent of which already had been put into effect), and that the conferences were beginning to influence more strongly the improvement of the activity of enterprises.

The Arduous March Forward

Margaret Dewar

MR. PAUL BARTON would appear to have exhausted all the available evidence relating to post-Stalin labor legislation, and on the basis of this evidence there is no reason to dispute his conclusion that "the status of the worker in Soviet society remains largely unchanged." Some might argue, however, that the present period is in the nature of a transitional one, and that, even though actual legislation under Khrushchev has not effected any radical alteration of labor relationships evolved over many years, it does indicate a trend in that direction. Just as legislation most favorable to the worker may in certain circumstances remain a dead letter (such as the social security provisions during the early post-1917 period, or the 7-hour working day at the beginning of the first Five-Year-Plan period), so may the harshest legislation either be largely evaded right from the start, or fall into disuse (for example, the circumvention of some of the measures tying the worker to his job in the 1930's, and the gradual easing of the ban on changing one's work in the early 1950's).

In any discussion of labor relations, it seems to me of paramount importance to bear in mind that the Soviet

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industrial worker's basic concerns are absolutely no different in essence from those of his counterpart in any democratic country. Both must necessarily be vitally concerned first and foremost with wages, hours of work, intensity of the labor process, conditions of work, and the general cost of living. It is these matters that form his basic social mentality, his attitude and/or actions as a worker vis-à-vis his employer.

The assumption made in some quarters that the Soviet worker identifies himself with the state to a greater extent than his counterpart elsewhere is, in my view, highly questionable. It is precisely because of this that the Soviet Government still needs the trade unions and fosters the myth that they genuinely represent the workers' interests in dealing with management. Certainly the worker in the United States does not question the social system itself; and even in Great Britain the majority of workers appear to favor the existing system—modified, perhaps, but not radically transformed. The lack of any electoral barometer in the Soviet Union, as well as the other well-known hindrances to free expression of opinion, make it impossible to obtain solid evidence of the Soviet worker's attitude towards the social setup. But even if it could be shown that the Soviet worker really does think that the interests of the state and his own are identical, this would not at all mean that his reactions to the daily facts of his working life are governed by that view. What dominates his consciousness is his relationship with his bosses—that is (whether he is aware of it or not) with the state.

IT IS AN INCONTESTABLE FACT that ever since the revolution of 1917 (not to speak of the period before it) the Soviet worker has had a hard, often exceedingly bitter struggle to make ends meet. He has been constantly goaded, prodded, and kicked by the state to work harder, work better, and produce more. He has, willy-nilly, done all these things, but he nevertheless has always remained at the end of the queue. Even the sum-total of the post-Stalin reforms does not amount to very much. None of them, in fact, represents an advance over the legislation enacted after the revolution of 1917—legislation that, in the main, only echoed concessions already achieved by the workers in the West. And as Mr. Barton points out, the Soviet worker is still subject to coercive measures, such as no trade unionist in any of the democratic countries would put up with.

To argue that the narrowing of wage differentials and the cutting of some bonuses indicate a return towards "egalitarianism" appears to me completely false. In any case, the "authoritative" statements quoted, say, by Mr. Feldmesser in his article, "Equality and Inequality Under Khrushchev" (*Problems of Communism,* March-April 1960), refer only to greater equality of "wages", not of incomes in general. The very fact that up to now the Soviet authorities are still reluctant to publish complete statistics on wages, salaries, and so-called "personal" salaries and pensions, or detailed information concerning other privileges accorded to top people, entitles one to assume that the gap between the privileged and non-privileged remains great.

Even if it is true that the general standard of living of the workers has been greatly raised, this of itself is no proof of enhanced status. The standard of living of individual citizens may, indeed, *reflect* their social status, but it does not, in itself, *confer* social status.

Further, although the share of the total social product available for general consumption has increased, it is admittedly still insufficient to apply the Communist principle of "to each according to his needs". The essence of the problem is: who decides the distribution of the national product?

In democratic industrial countries, independent and autonomous trade unions exist to ensure that the workers have something to say about this. In the USSR, the state is the sole arbiter of how the social product shall be distributed. The state being, in Marxist terms, "the executive committee of the ruling class", *i.e.,* of the party, it is only natural that it favors not only the specialists of all kinds who are vital to the economy of the country, but also a host of bureaucrats who are not. The trade unions are part of the state machinery: they are under the control of the party and work hand in glove with the managers to fulfill plan requirements. They do not advance any program of demands; they do not conduct any agitation for better working conditions. The workers are granted concessions, but they have no independent voice as to what these concessions shall be. They have no independent power because they lack the basic right which makes a trade union a trade union—*i.e.,* the right to strike. Only if this right were restored would the status of the Soviet worker be enhanced.

Speeches and articles glorifying the dignity of manual labor are hardly a novel feature of the Soviet scene. It is highly unlikely that they make much of an impression on the workers; indeed, they are positively ignored by "the golden youth" as well as by their parents. The worker's self-respect will not be restored in this way, because it still remains true that "those who would be free themselves must strike the blow."

IT IS OFTEN ARGUED that an advantage the Soviet system offers to the worker is that there are no rigid class barriers, that it is comparatively easy for him to move up in the social scale. Certainly there was great social mobility from the beginning of the 1917 revolution right up to shortly before World War II. The process of purging political opponents—real and imagined—in the Stalin era, coupled with the need to recruit an almost entirely new working class from among the peasantry, and to raise an army of "specialists" of all kinds, made for constant movement both up and down the social ladder. But as the new ruling class or stratum emerged, it sought at a certain stage—like all ruling classes—to close its

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ranks and perpetuate itself. Its members wanted to keep what they had and hand it on to their children. There came to be a striving for social stability in a period of flux—at first only partially successful. Now that the industrial base of the country has been solidly laid, the stabilization of the new ruling class is assured. Further economic expansion will necessarily enlarge this class and bring new recruits to it from below, but the status of the "working class" will not be radically changed until it finds its own independent voice, scorns paternalistic reforms from above, and regains the capacity to demonstrate directly its increased social weight.

The Muted Voices from Below

Solomon M. Schwarz

MR. BARTON'S article is highly interesting and provocative—the latter in the good sense of the word. It is based on a wide collection of Soviet sources, some of which are not easily attainable, and it is rich in useful information. In the present writer's view, however, Mr. Barton is in error on certain basic points, and the importance of his topic impels some critical remarks.

Is the status of the Soviet worker improving or not? Referring to an earlier study by Jerzy Gliksman, "Recent Trends in Soviet Labor Policy" (*Problems of Communism*, July-August 1956), Mr. Barton writes:

. . . the network of constraint entangling the Soviet worker today remains, if anything, even tighter than Mr. Gliksman supposed. While the recent changes generally tend to soften the harshest provisions of earlier legislation, they also introduce additional severities. (p. 19)

The emphasis of this passage, quoted from the author's opening paragraphs, is on the tightness of restraints. At the end of the article, however, he is less emphatic:

On balance, the recent labor reforms are an improvement to the extent that they moderate the pressures weighing on the shoulders of the worker; but they clearly do not go far enough. (p. 27)

A veteran in the field of Soviet labor and industrial problems, Mr. Schwarz is the author of the standard Labor in the Soviet Union *(Praeger, New York, 1952), and other works.*

The last qualification is without doubt true, but the assessment as a whole is less dire than his earlier remark. What, then, are the newly-introduced "additional severities" to which Mr. Barton makes reference?

A). First, the author holds that *orgnabor* activity "has grown considerably in recent years" (p. 20). He uses the term *orgnabor*—the organized recruitment of labor, a long-established practice in the *Kolkhozes* and more recently in the cities—to connote labor conscription. The present writer is not discussing here this characterization, though it is rather limited, but rather the thesis that *orgnabor* has been on the increase. The opposite seems to be true on the basis of the evidence. To cite one source:

In the last years the number of workers gained for production through *orgnabor* has decreased considerably. In the RSFSR and in the Kazakh SSR [this] number . . . in 1958 was two and a half times smaller than in 1955.[1]

B). The author is concerned about the role of the so-called comrades' courts, particularly those in industrial enterprises. It is impossible in this short commentary to discuss the many problems connected with the courts. Mr. Barton has dealt with the subject in detail, giving an interesting summary of the courts' development from the early years of the revolution and much valuable information on the way in which they operate today. One wonders, however, why he is so reproachful in characterizing them as "shock absorbers" between management and labor. What is *wrong* with the shock-absorbing function?

A more crucial argument must be raised over his critical assertion that "it is the plant manager alone who can bring a case before a comrades' court, and this is a most important point" (p. 22). The plant managers did enjoy such exclusive authority for decades—so that in any case the procedure could not be classified as an "additional severity" upon the workers. The fact is, however, that this authority has now been greatly diffused. The draft of a new law on comrades' courts was proposed for public discussion in October 1959; though it awaits final enactment by the Supreme Soviet, many of the proposed provisions have already been adopted in practice.

Article 9 of the draft reads as follows:

Comrades' courts shall hear cases:

1) on the recommendation of factory or local trade union committees, Young Communist League organizations, voluntary people's detachments for the preservation of public order, street committees and other public organizations, or of citizens' meetings at the offender's place of work;

2) on the recommendation of executive committees of local soviets or of their standing committees;

3) on the recommendation of the directors of enterprises, institutions and organizations, the boards of collective farms and producers' cooperatives, and the heads of housing bureaus and apartment house managements;

[1] V. Moskalenko, "Problems of the Organized Recruitment of Workers," *Sotisialisticheskii trud*, April 1960, p. 76.

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4) on the recommendation of a court, prosecutor or militia agency;

5) on application from citizens at the offender's place of work or place of residence.[2]

C). The author also employs the "shock-absorber" analogy with reference to the role of the trade unions. He cites as an example the part they play in the fixing and revision of output norms. Whereas in the Stalin era "management had gradually assumed full control in these matters and made its decisions on a completely unilateral basis," the trade unions have now been assigned some degree of participation in the important function of determining output quotas. To the author this constitutes simply a "type of exploitation of trade unions." He writes: " . . . the intent of new regulations seems to be little more than to make the [union-directed] factory committees responsible for dealing with workers irritated by the manipulation of norms" (quotes from p. 23). Available evidence certainly suggests that trade union representatives and factory committees sometimes—perhaps often—play the role of yes-men for management in the fixing of production norms. But does it follow that the introduction (actually the reintroduction) of the principle of trade union co-responsibility in this function represents not a step forward but a regression, an "additional severity"?

Beyond this issue, there is no doubt that an attempt has been made to introduce some elements of industrial democracy into Soviet life—this, in fact, has been the most interesting phenomenon in the recent development of the trade unions. Through various means the unions have been granted a new albeit limited influence over the administration, labor policies, and even the choice of leading personnel in industrial enterprises. Developments have been contradictory and beset with difficulties, but without doubt the trend as a whole has been constructive.[3] Mr. Barton recognizes this—with qualifications—but he does recognize it. Yet he then retreats once more to the observation that "the extension of the unions' responsibility in production, insofar as it affects the position of the worker, tends to amplify their function as shock absorbers between management and labor" (p. 25).

D). Further in his discussion of union developments, Mr. Barton makes the statement:

In March 1959 a new amendment [to the trade union statutes] was voted by the 12th Congress, which declared that it is the duty of each member to "carry out the social orders of the trade union organs." What "social orders" means was not explained, but there is little doubt that this grotesque expression was used to camouflage the full implications of a provision which authorizes the union bodies to give the workers whatever orders the party may deem necessary. (p. 25)

This interpretation is incorrect. In the passage Mr. Barton quotes from the trade union statutes, the term "social orders" ought to have been translated "social assignments" (the Russian was *"obshchestvennyie poruchenia,"* not *"obschestvennyie prikazy"*).[4] "Social assignments" is by no means a "grotesque expression" but, in contemporary Russian usage, a clear, definite term referring to work performed in the public interest outside the union member's regular job and as a rule without pay. "Assignments" sometimes involve the fulfillment of a specific task but most often consist of functions performed on a continuing basis—for example, membership on various types of committees and commissions, service as social insurance delegates, inspection and check-up duties as so-called "public controllers" (in housing, retail trade, *etc.*). The people who get such longer-term assignments—made through either appointment or "election"—are considered trade union "activists." If valid reasons are offered by a trade union member for refusing an "assignment," they will usually be accepted; evidence suggests, moreover, that the "activities" of many of the "activists" are merely nominal. Nonetheless the network of activists is an important institution and on the whole an asset to the unions. According to the chairman of the Central Council of Trade Unions, the activists now number some 12 million out of the total union membership of 52.8 million.[5]

E). In discussing social welfare measures, Mr. Barton makes the statement:

Most social security benefits, particularly paid leave, sick pay, pregnancy and maternity benefits, are scaled according to the length of uninterrupted employment in the same enterprise. With every change in jobs, moreover, the wage-earner loses his right to sick-pay for a period of six months (p. 19).

Though the fact is not widely known, the latter regulation has now been modified to a significant degree. A decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet on January 25, 1960, and approved by the Supreme Soviet on May 7, revised sick-pay benefits for job-holders as follows:

1) . . . workers and employees who have left their previous jobs of their own will are to be paid temporary disability benefits in all cases on a common basis, regard-

[2] "Draft: Model Statute on Comrade's Courts," *Izvestia,* October 24, 1959; as translated in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (New York), November 25, 1959; p. 16.

[3] The present writer has analyzed trade union developments in three articles: "The Sprouts of Economic Democracy," *Sotsialisticheskii vestnik* (New York), September 1958; "The 12th Trade Union Congress," *ibid.,* May 1959; "The Thaw in the Labor Policy," *ibid.,* December 1959.

[4] *Trud* (Moscow), April 2, 1959.

[5] *Ibid.,* March 24, 1959.

[6] "Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet on temporary disability benefits for workers and employees who have left their former jobs of their own will," *Vedomosti Verkhovnovo Soveta SSSR* (Moscow), No. 4 (988), Jan. 28, 1960; as translated in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* Feb. 24, 1960, p. 24.

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less of the amount of time they have worked at new jobs. 2) . . . workers and employees dismissed of their own will retain uninterrupted seniority if they begin [new] work within one month after the day of their dismissal.[6]

Inexplicably, the decree as issued in January was published only in the *Bulletin of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR* (see footnote 6); not until after its approval by the Supreme Soviet in May was it published in *Pravda* (of May 8th) and other papers. Thus it is no reproach to Mr. Barton that he was unaware of this interesting development.

A FEW WORDS are in order to put the above criticisms in perspective and to clarify the present writer's viewpoint. With regard to the basic issue posed, there is no doubt that the status of the Soviet worker *is* improving. Mr. Barton himself points out many positive developments in this respect, and others are discussed in Alec Nove's "Social Welfare in the USSR" (*Problems of Communism*, January-February 1960) and in the several commentaries accompanying it, including one by this writer.

To say that the worker's status is improving is not, however, to say that it has changed basically, or that labor relations in the Soviet Union are no longer based on constraint. The latter could never be claimed in the absence of free agreement between management and free labor organizations, and such features remain taboo for the time being in the Soviet system. The amelioration of the workers' lot—a necessity in modern industrial society—has been undertaken by the regime in a paternalistic manner, and certainly in part as an expedient response to unorganized but irresistible pressure from below. Until now the trade unions have played only an insignificant role in this development.

Yet the status and character of the trade unions is gradually changing, too. So far only a mere beginning has been made. But at least at the level of initial reform, the obstacles to change seem to be attributable less to the resistance of higher authorities than to the ineptness of the Communist bureaucracy entrenched in the trade unions. It seems manifest that this situation cannot prevail for long. Whatever the contradictions and difficulties, the general trend is a forward one.

A Reply

Paul Barton

MRS. DEWAR HAS DONE well to recall some of the elementary truths about the Soviet worker's status. I did not feel it necessary to repeat them in so many words, since I thought they were common knowledge. But Professor Brown's comments show that I was wrong. Thus Mrs. Dewar quite rightly says, "The trade unions are part of the state machinery . . ." and "the Soviet government . . . fosters the myth that they genuinely represent the workers' interests in dealing with management." Had Professor Brown been aware of these facts, she might possibly have been more circumspect in her assessment of the trade unions and the factory committees. In the same way, had she borne in mind that, as Mrs. Dewar puts it, "the assumption . . . that the Soviet worker identifies himself with the state to a greater extent than his counterpart elsewhere is . . . highly questionable," she would perhaps not have reproached me with having disregarded "the effectiveness of the ceaseless party and trade union propaganda linking the welfare of the workers with their success in fulfilling production plans." Moreover, it would be a good thing if every student wishing to speculate on the degree of the Soviet worker's identification with the state resolved at least to study the past record. In the present instance, he would find that the propaganda in question has been going strong for decades, and that the workers have never been taken in by it.

Indeed, if one wishes to interpret current phenomena realistically, one must always keep the past in mind. For example, with regard to party and Komsomol recruitment of workers for distant regions, Professor Brown invokes Soviet official statements which "insist that this recruitment is carried out strictly on a volunteer basis." But, as everyone knows, the Soviet authorities have been claiming this for a long time, yet it has never prevented them from doing just the opposite. As for the present, there are in the Soviet press and even literary fiction many references which might well arouse the vigilance of anyone inclined to accept the official version at its face value. Nor should one dismiss the evidence given by former "corrective-labor camp" inmates who, before their repatriation to the West, met these "volunteers" at work.

A look at the past is also helpful in correctly assessing the worth of statements of Soviet "experts" such as Professor N. G. Alexandrov, whom, according to Professor Brown, I am wrong not to take seriously. For many years now Alexandrov has been writing handbooks on labor-law for the use of Soviet universities. Professor Brown counters my analysis by repeating what she has read in the most recent of these handbooks (published last year), namely,

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that "genuine freedom of labor contract" is one of the basic principles of Soviet labor law. But Professor Alexandrov used the very same formula in the manual which he published ten years earlier—this at a time when the prohibition of unauthorized changes of employment, prosecutions for infractions of labor discipline, and forced transfers of workers from one factory to another were in full force. In the light of such facts as these, Professor Brown will not, I hope, contradict me when I say that, in spite of his academic position, Alexandrov cannot be considered anything more than a common propagandist specializing in labor law, just as others specialize in atheism or corn-growing.

IN ALL THIS, it seems to me, Professor Brown fails to observe the elementary methodological rule that Soviet sources should not be used without critical analysis. Whoever ignores this precept runs the risk of mistaking official fiction for reality. Professor Brown is simply wrong in believing that my method consists of noting down confessions of failure and disregarding information about successes; critical analysis of Soviet sources of information is, indeed, a rather more complicated matter. But the fact remains that if we all began to do what Professor Brown seems to advocate, our knowledge of Soviet life would suffer badly. For instance, I cannot help seeing traces of this very procedure in the manner in which she refers to the articles in the official Soviet press extolling the successes of the permanent production conferences. Let me pose a simple question: How does the fact that seven million people have been elected to these conferences contradict my argument? Isn't it common knowledge that elections are held whenever the leading trade union bodies and the economic authorities decree them, and that the numbers to be elected are fixed by the same orders from above?

As for the accounts of the success of the conferences, I cannot urge Professor Brown too strongly to reread the very similar panegyrics published ten, twenty or thirty years ago on the (non-permanent) production conferences. She would surely gain the impression, even after a quick comparison, that the authors of the present accounts are merely copying those of former years. In any case, similar eulogies, with a similarly false ring about them, could be found right up to the day when the Central Committee of the Communist Party decided to draw the practical consequences of the failure of the non-permanent production conferences by abolishing them and replacing them by the permanent conferences which are being eulogized now.

Finally, I should like to point out that an unfortunate misunderstanding, which changes perceptibly my argument, has slipped into Professor Brown's commentary. I do *not,* in fact, consider the network of constraint entangling the Soviet worker "to be even tighter than in 1956" There is not the slightest trace of such an opinion in my article. Professor Brown is probably alluding to my statement that this network "today remains, if anything, even tighter than Mr. Gliksman supposed" in his paper published in 1956, which is obviously quite another matter. In 1956, the late Mr. Gliksman based his assessment on reports which were available at the time. Since then, other information has come to the fore which enables us to see that the workers' status was then, and is still, more precarious than Mr. Kliksman supposed.

MR. SCHWARZ'S COMMENTS are of quite a different kind. He has studied Soviet labor conditions for many years, and I might say that we have all studied under him, by reading his various works in this field. So it would have been surprising had he not found some omissions or incorrect interpretations in my article.

Nevertheless, I fail to see the contradiction which Mr. Schwarz finds between my introduction and my conclusion, between my opinion that the constraint is still tight and my finding that there has been an improvement in this sphere. I find this particularly puzzling since Mr. Schwarz agrees with my statement that the reforms "clearly do not go far enough" and since, according to him, too, it cannot be claimed that the worker's status "has changed basically, or that labor relations in the Soviet Union are no longer based on constraint." In what respect, then, does Mr. Schwarz disagree with my basic theses?

The root of the problem probably lies in my statements regarding the imposition of new severities on Soviet labor and particularly in my opinion that the number of workers included in the *orgnabor* has grown in recent years. I did not miss Moskalenko's statement to the contrary when it appeared last spring; indeed, I referred to the article in which it appeared in support of my argument. The particular sentence which Mr. Schwarz quotes from Moskalenko's paper, however, is a puzzle which I was unable to discuss within the limits of my article: it is in flagrant contradiction with the rest of Moskalenko's information.

Moskalenko begins by saying that one of the principal current problems of the Soviet economy is how to provide manpower for the areas of expansion in the eastern USSR. He then shows that the *orgnabor* is the most important of the methods used: during 1955-1956 more than two-thirds of the workers directed to the eastern regions were sent on an *orgnabor* basis. Having noted that these workers are being channelled less and less into industry and transport and more and more into construction projects, the author emphasizes that the role of *orgnabor* in the transfer of manpower between economic areas "has greatly increased" in recent years. He specifies that in the RSFSR the part of *orgnabor* in the over-all transfer of workers rose from 49.3 percent in 1953 to 63.4 percent in the first half of 1960. After all these indications of the expansion of *orgnabor* comes the passage

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quoted by Mr. Schwarz. To reconcile it with the rest of the article, one would have to construct the following theory: the part of *orgnabor* in the transfer of manpower has relatively increased, but the over-all number of workers transferred has diminished so radically that the absolute number of persons included in *orgnabor* has fallen.

However, I consider it impossible to subscribe to this theory in view of the stress which the current Seven-Year Plan lays on the industrialization of the eastern areas. As to the question whether the *orgnabor* really is a form of labor conscription, I should like to point out that the workers enrolled do not have the right to leave the enterprise to which they have been sent before the expiration of the usual one to three-year term and that they are obliged to carry out any work assigned to them.

MR. SCHWARZ DOES NOT contest the introduction of another new severity mentioned in my article—*i.e.,* the tightening of the restrictions on the workers' movements In response to my discussion of the novel disciplinary functions of the comrades' courts, however, he suggests that the exclusive right of the plant manager to bring a case before the comrades' court has existed for decades, and that this procedure cannot therefore be regarded as a fresh constraint upon the workers' freedom. But I clearly stated that these courts are a recent creation because those which functioned before World War II had fallen into temporary disuse. The additional severity lies, it seems to me, in the fact that while the comrades' courts inflict the same disciplinary sanctions as the plant managers used to, they also take care to humiliate and defame the offending worker. I also pointed out in this connection that the current decentralization of disciplinary functions fails to relax the exercise of constraint; this is the intended result of the reinstatement of the comrades' courts, which enables the managers to shift responsibility for decisions injurious to the workers' dignity from their own shoulders to those of the trade unions. And if Mr. Schwarz asks "what is wrong with the shock-absorbing function," the reply is that in the present instance it is purely one-sided; its purpose is to neutralize the indignation of the workers without softening the severities which provoke it.

Mr. Schwarz's observations concerning the draft of a new law on comrades' courts do not, in my opinion, apply to the problem of labor discipline with which we are dealing here. The draft law aims at extending the jurisdiction of these courts to other matters ("preservation of public order"), but with regard to infractions of labor discipline, it does not modify the provisions of the law of April 25, 1956, which vested the plant managers with final authority in this field.

I have never asserted that the participation of trade unions in the organization of production represents an additional severity for the workers; Mr. Schwarz's attribution of such an interpretation to me is the result of a simple misunderstanding. Indeed, there were several references in my article to certain trade-union bodies which, under the weight of their new responsibilities, cannot withstand pressures coming from the workers, and which sometimes even adopt the latter's point of view. But I also showed that attitudes of this kind run counter to official policy and are pilloried by the superior bodies. Furthermore, I do not really see wherein Mr. Schwarz disagrees with my conclusion that the principal aim of the reform is the channelization of discontent, since he himself emphasizes its paternalistic nature and sees in it "an expedient response to unorganized but irresistible pressure from below."

The point on which we really disagree is Mr. Schwarz's contention that, with the grant of new influence to the trade unions, "an attempt has been made to introduce some elements of industrial democracy into Soviet life". The participation of trade unions in the organization of production can contribute to industrial democracy only where the worker is free, where the unions are independent, and where there exists a genuine right to strike and to bargain collectively. Democracy cannot develop on the basis of servitude. Otherwise, one could just as well see in the Supreme Soviet an expression of democracy pure and simple. But I think that after reading the comments of Professor Brown, who so easily applies to totalitarian phenomena terms such as "volunteer", "freedom" and even "genuine freedom", Mr. Schwarz will not feel that my objections are exaggerated. From this standpoint, too, one cannot emphasize too strongly the value of Mrs. Dewar's description of the background and, by the same token, the limits of the present reforms.

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Blueprint for the Future?

The Soviet Design for a World State,
by Elliot R. Goodman,
with a foreword by Philip E. Mosely.
Columbia University Press, New York, 1960.

Reviewed by Robert C. Tucker

THE WRITER OF *The Soviet Design for a World State* feels that a fundamental rethinking of the conditions for the survival of the West is in order, and that a "supranational Atlantic Community" represents a minimum definition of the practical task. The need for the Western powers to think and act along supranational lines is greatly accentuated, as he sees it, by the existence of a Soviet plan for a world state and by Moscow's persistent efforts to realize it:

Confronted with the Soviet design for a world state, can the non-Soviet world confine itself to a precarious patchwork of expedients, or must it not conceive of its future in positive, creative terms and hammer out some common plan for its own survival, which might ultimately foster the genuine integration of all nations?

The book begins with a review of the pre-history of the Soviet concept of a world state—*i.e.,* the theories of Marx and Engels. It then traces the rise of a Communist version of world federalism in Soviet Russia. On the morrow of the Bolshevik revolution, its leaders anticipated worker revolts in other countries and the early advent of what was variously called a "World Socialist Republic," an "International Republic of Soviets" and a "World Federal Republic of Soviets." When the first USSR Constitution was adopted in 1924, provision was made in it for admission of "all Socialist Soviet Republics, both those now in existence and those which will arise in the future." The existing Soviet federation was conceived as the nucleus of an eventual USSR of the world. On the other hand, the Comintern was both conceived and organized as a unitary world-wide Communist Party with national party sections. Thus, acceptance of the federal principle as the basis of organization of the world state was balanced, if not nullified, by provision for a non-federal, strictly centralized ruling party authority.

WHETHER THE SOVIET DESIGN for a world state is "well-delineated," as Mr. Goodman asserts, seems questionable in the light of all pertinent materials which he himself has amassed. All that has been said directly and explicitly by Soviet spokesmen about the shape of the projected Communist world order might easily be covered in a few pages, and the main substance of it has been summarized in the foregoing paragraph. The author, however, employs a method of extrapolation to fill out the picture. That is, developments since the 1920's in the structure and policy of the *existing* USSR are taken as indicative of corresponding developments in the *projected* world-USSR. Thus, the emergence of a Russian nationalist outlook and policy during the Stalin years leads the author to conclude that the Soviet leaders, while adhering as tenaciously as ever to the general idea of a world state, have redefined it as a "Russified world state." Somewhat unaccountably in view of the emphasis laid on this point, the discussion culminates in a chapter that draws primarily upon the (non-Russian-nationalist) ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Bukharin as sources for the *present-day* Soviet concept of the shape of the ultimate world Communist society.

Mr. Goodman's concern is not simply to delineate the Soviet idea of a world state but also to argue a definite interpretation of Soviet foreign policy, and this, it must be said, is a rather simplistic one. It holds that Soviet policy from Lenin to Khrushchev has been and remains a single-minded, never-changing pursuit of the goal of a world state. Citing a series of Soviet pronouncements over the years in which fidelity to this goal has been reaffirmed, Mr. Goodman concludes: "Though there has been a decided lowering in the level

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of expectation as to the immediate attainment of the world state, the goal itself remains as the polestar of Soviet policy." This kind of evidence, however, establishes only that the goal remains as before a component of Soviet *ideology*. It does not establish the author's proposition that the world state remains in the forefront of the "operational objectives" of Soviet foreign policy.

Nevertheless, this is the position taken throughout the book. It attributes to the Soviet leadership—regardless of who happens at any time to be the leader and what the particular circumstances of the period may have been—a relentless obsession with the realization of the "grand design," which is said in conclusion to be the "absorption of all nations of the world into the Soviet body politic." Various developments in the later years of Soviet doctrine are described as indirect expressions of the idea of the world state. Thus, the theories of "socialism in one country" and "peaceful coexistence" are called "hidden and indirect methods of stating the goal of a Soviet world state." And post-war departures that might indicate a more flexible approach to the problems of organizing a Communist world order are given short shrift.

INSTEAD OF INCORPORATING the satellite states created after the second World War directly into the Soviet federation, Stalin maintained the fiction of their sovereign independence. At the same time, Soviet international lawyers, beginning around 1948, developed the concept of a "socialist international law" governing the relations between the USSR and other states of a Soviet type. This doctrinal innovation, which suggested at the very least a modification of the original federative concept of the world state, has been further elaborated during the post-Stalin period. More important, there has emerged in Soviet doctrine after Stalin, particularly beginning in 1955, the concept of an *international system* ("world system") of Communist states under Soviet or Soviet-Chinese hegemony. And these doctrinal developments have been accompanied by significant changes in the methods by which Moscow maintains its dominance in the Communist bloc.[1]

[1] For a discussion of the concept of a "socialist international law," see John N. Hazard, "Soviet Socialism as a Public Order System," in *Proceedings of the American Society of International Law*, 1959. The concept of a "world system of socialist states" has been analyzed, and its implications emphasized, by Kurt L. London in his article "The 'Socialist Commonwealth of Nations'," *Orbis*, (Philadelphia), Winter, 1960.

Insofar as Mr. Goodman takes account of these and related developments of the recent period, his main concern appears to be to show that they do not involve the slightest weakening of the postulated inflexible resolve in Moscow to incorporate all the nations of the world into the Soviet body politic. Despite the fact that Moscow no longer rules the smaller bloc states as if they were mere *oblasti,* as in Stalin's time, he asserts that "in fact, if not in name, the European satellites are being prepared for their transformation into Union Republics of the Soviet Union," and even objects that the term "satellite" implies "too much independence." The new concept of a "socialist international law" is disregarded. The doctrine of the "commonwealth of socialist nations" or "world system of socialist states" is dealt with under the heading of "Way Stations to the Soviet World State" and its significance is treated as nil or next to nil. Such new or newly activated international institutions of the Soviet bloc as the Warsaw pact, the Council for Mutual Economic Aid and the Joint Nuclear Research Institute are described as omens of the "formal annexation of the captive European states by the Soviet federation at some undefined future moment that Moscow will regard as expedient." Only China gives Mr. Goodman pause. He asserts: "When it is asked how China, and all the multitudes of Asia, fit into this picture [*i.e.,* the picture of a "Russified world state"—R.T.], it must be recognized that they do not." But nothing is said to indicate that such recognition may also have dawned in Moscow.

THIS BOOK CONTAINS a great deal of factual material drawn from the history of Soviet doctrine and policy; the writer's careful research will undoubtedly be of real interest and value to the specialist as well as the general reader. As has been indicated here, however, the book's theoretical structure is open to serious question at a number of points. In the theoretical respect it belongs to a genre of literature that has a long tradition. It is the tradition of Friedrich Engels' article of 1890 on "The Foreign Policy of Russian Tsarism," in which the history of Russian foreign relations was treated as the pursuit by a "Jesuit order" of diplomats of "its own single, never-changing, never lost-sight-of objective: the domination of the world by Russia." The principal objection to such efforts to explain everything by some one abstract and neverchanging objective is that they oversimplify a highly complex reality and unduly minimize the significance of change within the continuity of Russia's dynamic expansionism under the old regime and again under the new.

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Communism in the USA

American Communism and Soviet Russia,
by Theodore Draper.

The Decline of American Communism,
by David A. Shannon.

Both volumes in the series, "Communism in American Life," Viking Press, New York, 1959.

Communism in American Politics,
by David J. Saposs.

Public Affairs Press, Washington, D.C., 1959.

Reviewed by William C. Gausmann

IN THE SECOND VOLUME of his history of the Communist Party of the United States, which deals with the years 1923-29, Mr. Draper concentrates on one theme: "the relation of American communism to Soviet Russia." [1] No one familiar with the history of Western Communist parties will have the slightest doubt as to the essential nature of that relationship. But, so far as this reviewer is aware, no study comparable in thoroughness or objectivity to Mr. Draper's has yet been published about any Western party organization. His book, therefore, is an important contribution to an understanding of international communism as well as a definitive treatment of its American subject.

As the author reminded us in his earlier work, the CPUSA sprang from several sections of the pre-1917 radical movement in the United States. The membership blocs which went into the party consisted largely of recent immigrants, still speaking their native tongues and in no real sense assimilated to American life or the American labor movement. But from the beginning most of the party's leading figures were either native-born Americans, or immigrants of not quite such recent arrival who had been active in left-wing trade union or political movements.

So, while their subsequent Communist careers were molded by Moscow's pressures, the precise application of those pressures was influenced by their own attitudes, talents and weaknesses that they brought into the party with them. Indeed, several of the crucial first interventions of the Russian party, via the Comintern, in American party affairs were provoked by the inability of the warring local factions to compose their petty quarrels. Thus it was necessary to take appeals to Moscow. Successive factional leaders were to learn that most of their following remained loyal only so long as Moscow sanctioned their leadership.

Just how loose early Comintern practice was, at least *vis-à-vis* the unimportant American party, is highlighted by Mr. Draper's inability to discover how much authority the Russians had intended to vest in a Hungarian friend of Zinoviev's, Joseph Pogany, otherwise John Pepper, when he came to America in 1922. That he was to one degree or another the Comintern's representative, however, gave even this mercurial person immediate status with American Communists, and it was not until his credentials seemed to be expiring that the faction which he had opposed was able to push him aside. Meantime he had in 1924 guided his American critics into sabotaging the first successful "United Front" they had created.

Pepper's fall resulted not from his ineptness in American politics, but from the changed fortunes of his patron—Zinoviev. Thereafter, Moscow was more careful in its choice of emissaries. Pepper's replacement was S. I. Gusev (P. Green), a Bolshevik member of the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, but a bitter personal enemy of its leader, Trotsky. He came to the United States a year after the abandonment of the Pepper policy, with unquestionable credentials permitting him to prevent Pepper's critics from using their majority in the CPUSA to oust the Hungarian's erstwhile friends. This was during the period of the Stalin-Bukharin collaboration. When Bukharin fell from grace, the best-known American beneficiaries

[1] Mr. Draper's first volume, *The Roots of American Communism,* was reviewed in the May-June 1957 issue of this journal.

Mr. Gausmann, who until recently has been Labor Information Officer at the London branch of the U. S. Information Service, has written extensively for American and British labor and trade union journals.

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of Gusev's intervention were suspect, and they too were displaced as leaders by those members of both factions enjoying the confidence of Moscow. The 1929 casualties had been among the most glib apologists for Russian intervention in the previous go-around, so what could they now say?

The 1929 change in leadership marked the real "Bolshevization" of the American party. The process had begun four or five years previously under the guidance of Zinoviev and Piatnitsky, when—on paper at least—the party's structure was streamlined. During the 1924-29 period of intensive internecine struggle within the Russian party, "Bolshevization" as an organizational theory had only slim results in the West. But the attempt to apply it produced the first generation of disciplined functionaries, and installed in leading positions everywhere those of the older CP members who had, through luck or ability, best anticipated the outcome of Stalin's changes in policies and alignments. So far as the making of policy and even the determination of tactics were concerned, "Bolshevization" meant both "Russification," against which Zinoviev had warned, and bureaucratization, which he—to his subsequent sorrow—had encouraged. Thus factionalism, which had contributed to the original willingness of American Communists to accept tactical dictation as well as strategic guidance from Moscow, all but ended after 1929. Such debates as took place thereafter were not about American politics or trade unionism, but about how to implement Soviet directives.

AFTER "Bolshevization," and the 1929-35 "Third Period," however, there was a relaxation of tactical control by Moscow, specifically notable during the 1935-39 "Popular Front" era and again in World War II, when Soviet survival required a Western alliance. Stalin seems to have assumed that by 1935 his lieutenants in the West were sufficiently reliable to be given a measure of operating autonomy, which neither he nor Lenin nor Zinoviev would have dreamed of permitting them prior to the stabilization of power in the Soviet Union, and which was now granted only because of the dire need for friends in the "bourgeois" democracies.

The most important chapters of Mr. David Saposs' *Communism in American Politics* are those which describe the advantage that the long-tempered Stalinist leadership was able to take of these years of tactical responsibility. In an atmosphere of economic depression and political upheaval, "Popular Frontism" gave the CPUSA its one moment of political significance. The instability of its successes, however, can be judged by the simple fact that it did not work in the open with such political organizations as it had induced into alliances, but rather disguised itself behind masks of ancient Populism (primarily in the Western part of the country) and fraudulent liberalism (in the East). Very few of the thousands of Americans who, as Mr. Saposs ably shows, were following the much diluted "line" that the Communists promoted through various "transmission belts" in 1935-39 were aware that they were doing so, and when the next great change in the "line" took place (*i.e.,* after the Hitler-Stalin pact) they promptly "got off."

In effect, the net result of the party's activity during the "Popular Front" era, in the war, and finally in the immediate postwar period (when the CP, working through the so-called "Progressive Party," succeeded in enlisting former Vice President Wallace in its cause) was to affront successively the leftist elements of young American socialists, trade union militants and progressive intellectuals. Each group in turn emerged from exposure to the CPUSA's Machiavellian tactics, and to its total vacuousness as a source of original or constructive social and intellectual criticism of America, with a knowledgeable detestation of the party and its masters. As a consequence the American left has since constituted a barrier to Communist penetration of either politics or trade unionism—a barrier of such strength and sophistication that no repetition of the successes by deceit which Mr. Saposs has described seems possible. Still, each generation has to learn its own lessons, as this volume and Mr. Saposs' earlier *Communism in American Unions* show. Even in America there will still be some recruits who will insist on learning the hard way. In the reviewer's opinion, they will more likely be self-appointed friends of Khrushchev impressed by Soviet technological affluence than followers recruited through contact with the surviving hard core of pre-1956 American Stalinism.

BOTH Mr. Saposs and Dr. David A. Shannon, the latter in his *The Decline of American Communism,* tell the humiliating story of how the CPUSA, in its last big venture in American politics, persuaded a former Vice President of the United States to carry its banner. In 1945 the "line" had veered sharply away from the Communists' wartime support of the Democratic administration and the promise of eternal Soviet-American collaboration. At the height of that collaboration Earl Browder, general secretary of the CPUSA, had offered to "clasp the hand" of any available representative of the House of Morgan, just as Harry Pollitt in Great Britain had talked of a continuation of the

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National Government after the war, not of a Labor victory. It was against Browder that Stalin directed his anathemas in the famous Duclos letter of April 1945, thus enabling William Z. Foster, the hoary leader of one of the factions of the 1920's, to return to power in the CPUSA. (Almost ignored outside "the left," the Duclos attack on "Browderism" appeared in Paris in *Cahiers du Communisme* three months before the Potsdam conference. It was probably written in Moscow the previous month, just after the Yalta Conference. While the "Big Four" were meeting in Potsdam, the CPUSA was obediently dispensing with the services of the ablest of its leaders. Since for the moment only the United States was to be the enemy in the cold war that the Duclos letter clearly proclaimed, Pollitt was permitted to live out his days as titular leader of British communism. Duclos himself was the parliamentary floor leader of French communism's support of a de Gaulle government. Only when Stalin's hope of destroying democracy was dashed by the joint American-British-French defense of Berlin and by the cooperative effort of the Marshall Plan in 1947-48 were British and French Communists required to adopt as "hard" a line as their American comrades had been given two years earlier.)

The younger generation of party functionaries, who unquestioningly accepted Foster as the party's leader, had tasted the lush fruits of "Popular Frontism." While adhering to the theory of the "hard" line of Stalin's last years, they were the organizers of poor Mr. Wallace's 1948 presidential campaign. In the process they destroyed the party's trade union influence, and for the foreseeable future discredited in the minds of American radicals the long-cherished idea of a "third"—or labor—party. When the Korean War began Wallace immediately endorsed the United Nations' resistance to Communist aggression; the Communists found, not for the first time, that in organizing a large-scale front organization—in this case the Progressive Party—around a leader who, for all his naiveté, was essentially committed to democratic, anti-totalitarian principles, they had ended up by capturing only themselves.

Dr. Shannon goes on to tell the dreary story of the CPUSA to the bitter end—the departure from its ranks of all but the most self-enchained after the Soviet slaughter of the Hungarian revolutionaries. In this decade of its final decline, the American party has operated not only in a vacuous atmosphere of ineptitude and isolation, but with an illogicality that in some respects defies all understanding. Probably the most outstanding case in point was the resuscitation of the weird theory of the separate nationality of American Negroes, and hence of their right to self-determination in the "Black Belt"—a concept that had never won any support whatsoever among a group whose main aspiration has been to win integration into the mainstream of American life. Failure to win mass support among American Negroes, the emphatic rejection of the Communists by both the middle-class National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the newly-formed American Negro Labor Council, has been the party's bitterest disappointment—and in effect its *coup de grâce*. Having lost the support of the left, of labor, of intellectuals, and now of the ethnic minority whose number of grievances is matched by its newly-emergent and forward-looking militancy, the CPUSA has finally turned into a small and forlorn band of sectarians—to be pitied, perhaps, or despised, but certainly no longer to be taken seriously as a meaningful force in American politics.

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From Jail to Freedom

Political Prisoner,
by Paul Ignotus.
Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1959.
Macmillan Co., New York, 1960.

You Are All Alone,
by Jozsef Kovago.
F. A. Praeger, New York, 1959.

Reviewed by Paul Kecskemeti

AFTER THE DEFEAT of Germany in World War II, Hungary, along with other European countries liberated from Nazi occupation, embarked on an experiment in political democracy. At first professing support of a multi-party system, the Communists—side by side with other political groups that had been active in the anti-German underground, notably the Smallholders and the Social Democrats—threw themselves with zest into the electoral game. All parties with an anti-Nazi record were certified "democratic" and assured of the benevolence of the CP. In elections in the fall of 1945, however, the Smallholders won a handsome majority of parliamentary seats, with the Social Democrats and the Communists trailing. It took the Communists (with the help of the Soviet Army) more than three years to perfect the machinery of terror that enabled them to defy the will of the electorate and to wipe out the other parties.

By 1948 and early 1949 the Communists had already silenced the more outspoken Smallholder and Socialist leaders by intimidation or in many cases by imprisonment. In the summer of 1949 a wholesale campaign of terror was launched, casting its shadow over all groups or individuals who had participated in post-liberation politics except the inner clique led by the Communist boss Matyas Rakosi. The first victims were Laszlo Rajk and his associates, accused of "Titoism." Subsequently thousands of Social Democrats and Smallholders, as well as Communists in disfavor, were arrested and tortured into admitting wholly fictitious charges of collaboration with the secret services of the Western "imperialist" powers. The accused were generally tried *in camera* and given long prison sentences on the strength of their extorted confessions.

THIS WAS THE EXPERIENCE of the authors of the two books under review. Paul Ignotus, who describes himself as an adherent of the "old-fashioned Left," spent the war years in London as a refugee from nazism. After the war he joined the Hungarian Social Democratic Party and stayed on in London as a staff member of the Hungarian Legation. Called to Budapest ostensibly to receive instructions, he was arrested in September 1949. Jozsef Kovago, an engineer by profession and ardent member of the Smallholder Party, participated in the anti-Nazi underground during the war and subsequently was elected Mayor of Budapest in the Smallholder landslide of 1945. The Communists gradually deprived him of his authority and finally of his post; his arrest took place in May 1950.

Although both authors show restraint and detachment in describing their experiences in prison, the effect of their accounts is shattering. Despite the large number of such records, one is never inured to the shock of the inhuman prison brutality to which helpless people have been subjected. Yet somehow both men managed to survive the worst years of their suffering. With Stalin's death and Imre Nagy's first succession to the premiership of Hungary (June 1953-April 1955), there was some alleviation of the prisoners' lot. Then, following the 20th Congress of the CPSU, there was a wholesale review of the cases of leftwing political prisoners. Mr. Ignotus was freed in March 1956. Later that year the crisis of growing public ferment confronting the regime led to the release of many other prisoners, among them Mr. Kovago; that was a few weeks before the October revolution.

Mr. Kecskemeti has been associated with the Rand Corporation (Washington, D. C.) for a number of years. He is the author of Strategic Surrender *(Stanford University Press, 1958) and of numerous articles on totalitarian systems and international politics.*

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One of the most instructive aspects of the two volumes is the insight they offer on political behavior under the threat of totalitarianism. The authors stand far apart in the political spectrum; Ignotus has his spiritual home among Western humanitarian socialists, where Kovago's political thinking is rooted in the traditional mystique of Hungarian patriotism. Yet both men acted from similar motives: once the Nazi yoke was thrown off, it became in effect a moral duty to promote their respective political ideals—humanitarian socialism in the one case, national revival in the other. Neither of them seems to have believed that his effort was doomed in advance, that the onset of Stalinist totalitarianism was inevitable. They were not blind to the danger, but they pinned their hopes upon the counterforces they represented.

Ignotus sums up his attitude before his arrest as follows: "I see that to save peace and the Socialist achievements of the present [post-liberation] regime, we must cooperate with the Communists, whether we agree with them or not." He defends himself against the criticism that this view reflected the "gullibility of a naive liberal." It was, he says, "chiefly a wish to make the best of things." He and his colleagues were fearful of trouble, but had no choice other than to attempt lawful political competition with the hope that the forces of peace and democratic socialism might somehow prevail.

The attitude of Mr. Kovago and his Smallholder friends was not dissimilar. They also were aware of the Communist threat but decided to take an active part in the political game, even under the rigged rules contrived by the adversary. In acting thus, however, they placed reliance on the strength of a force that to them was more tangible and real than the broad appeals of peace and socialism. That force was the legal, constitutional authority emanating from the expressed will of the nation. The concept of legal and constitutional rights as a vital power in themselves, a bulwark of the national existence, is a part of Hungary's fundamental political tradition. For centuries resistance against foreign rule has been carried on as a matter of defending inalienable national rights.

This concept of politics as an activity consisting in the implementation of rights and legal titles (which could be denied by force but never given up voluntarily) also played a considerable role in the 1956 revolution, to which Mr. Kovago devotes illuminating pages in his book. In the days before the die was cast by Soviet military intervention, he was among those who argued against all odds that the revolution could not stop short of Hungary's reassertion of complete independence and secession from the Communist bloc. He quoted himself as having held that "the Soviets must know that Hungary is a sovereign state like Austria and [that] any military attack might involve the Western world." In short, the legal right of self-determination was clear, and there could be no other guiding principle for action.

BOTH AUTHORS, THEN, entered Hungarian post-liberation politics in the belief that as declared adversaries of the old order, recognized by the Communists themselves as "democratic" partners, they had genuine scope for action. They did expect political difficulties and differences with the Communists, but they certainly never foresaw that criminal charges would be brought against them. Yet Communist logic dictated that they would end up as criminals precisely because they had originally been accepted as partners. When the Stalinist leadership of Hungary was ready to get rid of them, it could not simply engineer a break by invoking policy differences, for this would have meant admitting divisions within the camp of "democracy"—something unthinkable by definition. Once the Communists had conceded the right of others to a share of power and authority, that right could be withdrawn only on evidence that the people in question had never been what they seemed, but had wormed their way into party favor as disguised enemy agents. Hence the maniacal insistence of the party's inquisitors upon obtaining confessions to preposterous charges of spying —charges which they themselves could not have believed to be true.

Besides being human documents of absorbing interest, both of the books here reviewed are valuable for the light they throw upon the mechanism of the synthetic purge trial as an instrument of totalitarian policy. One would like to believe that the hideous brutalities described by the authors are now a thing of the past in the Communist world. But the record stands in all its monstrosity, and despite the notable retreat from Stalinist terror in the last seven years, the basic principle underlying that terror has not changed: communism cannot share and then take away political power without resort to the weapons of purge and character assassination.

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Transition to Communism:

The Case of Soviet Sports

IN HIS REPORT to the Extraordinary 21st Congress of the CPSU in January 1959, Khrushchev proclaimed that the Soviet Union had "entered a new historical period of its development"—the period of final transition from socialism to the promised millenium of full communism.[1] During this stage, he announced, functions hitherto exercised by state agencies would gradually be transferred to "voluntary public orgnizations," thus realizing the Marxist prediction of the "withering away of the state." [2]

As evidence that this historic process had already been set in motion, Khrushchev cited a recently-announced resolution of the party Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers providing for a basic change in the administration of Soviet physical culture and sports. Specifically, the resolution ordered the dissolution of the existing state administrative apparatus in charge of athletic affairs, headed by the All-Union Committee of Physical Culture and Sports, and provided for the complete transfer of its functions to a network of "public organizations" to be formed under the title of the Union of Sports Societies and Organizations of the USSR. The fact that the resolution had been made public just a week before the 21st Congress convened suggests that it was deliberately timed to provide Khrushchev with a concrete example to point to in support of his thesis on the transition to communism.

Today, however, the Soviet Union hardly seems any closer to the "stateless" society of Marxist prophesy than it was at the time of the 21st Congress. Under Khrushchev's rule, it is true, greater responsibility has been given to local soviets and trade union organizations, and new bodies of a non-governmental, public character—*i.e.*, "people's militia" and "comrades' courts"—have been created alongside the regular police and judicial organs of the state. On the other hand, the dissolution of the former government administration of sports which Khrushchev cited nearly two years ago still remains the sole instance of a "withering" of the state apparatus. This might indicate that the Soviet leadership is not yet fully satisfied with the results of the pilot project. Nevertheless, since it is still possible that other state agencies may in time be similarly replaced by "voluntary public organizations," the change in the Soviet administration of sports and the motivations behind it merit closer examination.

THE SOVIET DECISION to transfer the administration of sports to "public organizations" must be viewed in the context of a policy which has consistently regarded the physical as well as spiritual molding of Soviet citizens as a vital prerogative of the party. From the earliest years of the Communist regime, the party leadership took prompt action to provide funds for the development of a nationwide physical culture program and to build up an elaborate governmental apparatus to organize and direct it. Separate governmental agencies for this purpose were first set up at the republic level in 1923, and in 1930 these became part of a unified administrative structure under central government direction. In 1936, the central agency was attached to the USSR Council of Ministers and was given the title of All-Union Committee of Physical Culture and Sports (hereafter referred to as AUC), exercising control over counterpart committees at the republic and lower administrative levels.[3] Under the direction of this massive apparatus, a gigantic sports program was developed with the manifold task of drawing the masses into party-controlled activities and "educating" them in Communist ideas, boosting labor production and military pre-

[1] *Pravda*, January 28, 1959.

[2] Khrushchev implied that these organizations would be of a fundamentally different character: *i.e.*, based on "the genuine rule of the people, the fullest development of the initiative and activity of the mass of working people, self-government of the people." He indicated, however, that the state would continue to function in the area of defense as long as the Soviet Union and its allies were threatened. *Ibid.*

[3] I. I. Nikiforov, "Organizatsionnye osnovy sovetskovo fizkulturnovo dvizheniia" (Organizational Bases of the Soviet Physical Culture Movement), *Teoriia i praktika fizichesko kultury*, Vol. XX, No. 7 (1957), pp. 492-93.

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paredness through physical fitness, and training athletes capable of winning prestige for the Soviet Union in international sports competition.[4]

The party's control of sports thus became an established principle at an early date, but the concept of entrusting the administrative functions to a broader public organization rather than to the state apparatus had been sporadically advanced long before it was finally sanctioned by the party leadership in January 1959. In fact, the first proposal along this line was put forward in 1922, but was dropped in the face of strenuous opposition from the Komsomol, which feared that its own position as the party's youth organization might be challenged by a separate sports association. Later reversing its position, the Komsomol itself, in 1928 and again in 1956, proposed the establishment of a single public sports association under its own aegis to replace the governmental administrative structure, but on both occasions the party leadership vetoed the proposal as impractical and premature.[5] By the beginning of 1959, however, party policy had also shifted in favor of a transformation of the bureaucratic system of sports administration, though not exactly along the lines favored by the Komsomol.

THE JANUARY 1959 RESOLUTION calling for the formation of a "democratically" organized Union of Sports Societies and Organizations (hereafter, USSO) received a characteristically enthusiastic welcome in the Soviet press. *Pravda* and *Izvestia* (January 22) hailed it as marking "a new epoch for the Soviet physical culture movement." *Sovetskii Sport* (January 23) declared that the action of the party leadership and government offered "unlimited scope for the creative initiative and independent activity of physical culturists and sportsmen" and paved the way for a "democratization of leadership organs" which would attract "new millions of workers to physical culture and sports."

The resolution fixed March 1, 1959, as the deadline for the dissolution of the AUC and its counterpart committees on all government levels. Pending the completion of organizational work and the holding of elections to the leadership organs of USSO, *orgburos* were to function as caretaker bodies. The make-up of the *orgburos* was not specified, but in all probability they did not differ greatly from the outgoing governmental committees.

A much clearer picture of the new sports organization and how it would function was given on February 19, 1959, when the draft statutes of USSO (consisting of 46 articles) were published, ostensibly to permit "public discussion."[6] The projected organizational structure, closely patterned after that of the Communist Party, provided for a pyramidal hierarchy of similar organs on the several successive levels of administration—all-Union, republic, *krai, oblast, raion* and city—the lower-level bodies electing delegates to those on the next higher level according to the principle of "democratic centralism." Theoretically, the highest organ was to be the All-Union Conference of USSO, corresponding to the Party Congress, but like the latter it was to meet only once every four years. Between meetings, a Central Council paralleling the party Central Committee and convened twice a year was to implement the directives of the Conference. Actual day-to-day direction of affairs, however, was to be entrusted to the Council's Presidium, whose decisions, as well as those of the Council, would be binding.

THE OBVIOUS SIMILARITY between the organization of USSO and the party structure gave advance warning that "democratization" might prove more nominal than real, and this impression was further strengthened by the proceedings of the "constituent conferences" held on all levels throughout the country from February through April to set up the organs provided for in the USSO statutes. The conferences gave the impression of well-staged "pep rallies" rather than of genuine and spontaneous deliberations, the proceedings everywhere following virtually the same perfunctory pattern. The opening address was generally delivered by the party secretary, followed by the *orgburo* chairman and other speakers, all of whom thanked the party and government for their continuing interest in physical culture and sports, and stressed the theme that a "new epoch" had begun for Soviet sports, requiring a new approach to sports work. Achievements and deficiencies were noted, and target goals for sport during the period of the Seven-Year Plan were discussed, with particular emphasis on trebling the number of participants, raising sports proficiency, and expanding the scope of organizational activity.

The elections to leadership organs, as well as of delegates to the next higher conference, also followed a set pattern. These were uniformly conducted by a show of hands, making it easy to assure the election of party-chosen nominees. Each conference, in addition to electing the members of the Council and Council Presidium, designated the chairman and vice-chairmen of the Presidium. The chairman of the *orgburo* was invariably elected to the chairmanship of the Presidium. As for the vice-chairmen, the conferences had been "democratically advised" in advance by N. N. Romanov, the former chairman of the AUC and then chairman of the central *orgburo*, as well as by the Central Committee of the Komsomol and the Central Council of Trade Unions, that these secondary posts should be filled by Komsomol and trade union nominees. This "advice" was dutifully followed in the conference elections.

The emptiness of the official promises of a "new epoch" under USSO was occasionally betrayed in other ways,

[4] On the nature and role of sports in the USSR, see the writer's "Notes on Soviet Sport," *Soviet Survey*, No. 31 (January-March 1960), pp. 75-80.

[5] Nikiforov, op. cit., p. 493.

[6] *Sovetskii sport*, February 19, 1959.

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as for example by an incident during the constituent conference in Tashkent. After several speakers, including the party secretary, had delivered addresses along standard themes, the *orgburo* chairman suddenly interrupted the proceedings to announce:

Many comrades want to go to the concert which will take place following the conference. In order to avoid having them arrive late, the Presidium offers this suggestion: that the conference hear two more speakers and then terminate the discussion.[7]

Thereupon, the debate was speedily concluded, and the conference proceeded to wind up its business in a matter of minutes by electing 69 members to the USSO Council for Tashkent, as well as a long slate of delegates to the higher *oblast* conference. Such transparent overzealousness was, of course, severely criticized by the press.

THE PROCESS OF organizing USSO reached its culmination with the holding of the inaugural All-Union Conference in Moscow on April 17-18. The proceedings were essentially no different in character from those of the lower-level conferences, but since the All-Union Conference stood at the apex of the whole USSO structure, it was used by the central sports leadership as a national sounding board for propagandizing the "new epoch" in Soviet sports and enunciating the tasks of the new organization.

P. N. Pospelov, then one of the secretaries of the party Central Committee and a candidate member of the CC Presidium, opened the conference with a special message of greetings from the Central Committee calling upon USSO "to execute the historic decisions of the 21st Party Congress" and to "further develop mass participation in physical culture and sports as one of the important means of Communist education."[8] In conformity with the pattern followed at the lower-level conferences, N. N. Romanov, as chairman of the central *orgburo,* was duly "elected" to the chairmanship of the Presidium of the USSO Central Council, thus assuming a position equivalent to his former post as AUC chairman. Romanov, in his new capacity, delivered the major address of the conference setting forth the tasks of USSO and calling for "a decisive change in all methods and styles of work."[9]

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the two-day proceedings was the report given by D. V. Postnikov, who as vice-chairman of the central *orgburo* had been in charge of drawing up the draft statutes of USSO, and who was elected by the conference to a vice-chairmanship of the new Central Council Presidium. Postnikov acknowledged that public discussion had brought forth proposals for certain changes in the statutes, in particular a suggestion by "many comrades" urging "that future elections in the Union be conducted by secret ballot." He rationalized the original statute provision for electing officials by a show of hands as having been framed with a view to "reducing the period of organization," but he added that the *orgburo* now felt this to be no longer necessary. He therefore proposed that the statutes be amended to provide that all elections of members to leadership organs and of delegates to higher conferences be conducted by secret ballot, except—significantly enough—that physical culture groups (*i.e.,* the primary organizational units of USSO) should continue to choose their conference delegates by a show of hands.[10]

According to statistics announced at the conference, a total of more than 140,000 delegates had been elected to the constituent conferences on all levels, and over 40,000 of these were claimed to have taken active part in conference discussions. The statistics also revealed, not surprisingly, that 445 of the 532 delegates to the All-Union Conference were either regular or candidate members of the Communist Party.[11]

WHAT, THEN, IS the real significance of the new "public organizations" of which USSO is presumably the prototype? Does their substitution for the government bureaucracy—assuming that the process is to continue—really signify a historic "new era" of Soviet development, the final stage of the advance to communism, as the Soviet leadership claims?[12] Or is the new form of organization designed, in reality, to serve as the instrumental model of the future for assuring continued party control—an instrument which will function more subtly and also more effectively to expand popular participation in party-directed activity aimed toward party-prescribed goals?

If USSO is indeed the *avant-courier* of the new system, then the answer suggested by the evidence to date is that the historic transformation proclaimed by Khrushchev at the 21st Congress will amount to little more than pouring old wine into new bottles.

In the first place, the conversion of the sports structure was willed from the start by the party leadership and carried out according to party-laid plan under the constant control of the party apparatus. The statutes which fixed the organizational pattern, functions, and procedure of USSO were obviously drafted in accordance with party specifications; and while public discussion of the "draft" was invited, it was the party which set the limits of discussion and which—as Postnikov's remarks at the All-

[7] *Ibid.,* March 26, 1959.
[8] *Pravda,* April 18, 1959.
[9] *Sovetskii sport,* April 18, 1959.
[10] *Ibid.,* April 19, 1959.
[11] *Ibid.,* April 18, 1959.
[12] Some Western writers on Soviet affairs have taken the view that the public oranizations do represent a new departure. For example, the British observer Edward Crankshaw writes, "The whole concept of the 'public organization,' as distinct from state and party organs, is so new and radical. . . ." *Khrushchev's Russia,* Penguin Books, Baltimore, 1959, p. 94.

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Union Conference implied—decided how far public "suggestions" were to be accepted. Although the rule requiring elections by a show of hands has since been modified, its application in the initial formation of USSO, together with the party's insistence that its satellite organizations, the Komsomol and the trade unions, be given key positions in the leadership organs, ensured that party control would be firmly established from the start.

There *are,* of course, noticeable differences between present and past Soviet policies in the realm of sports, although these do not result from the establishment of the new sports administration (which they preceded), but rather reflect the general change in the political climate of Khrushchev's Russia. No longer is the sports program under the direction of a high official of the security police, as it was when Colonel-General Appolonov occupied the AUC chairmanship from shortly after World War II until Stalin's death. Nor is it likely that a Soviet athletic team today would suffer peremptory dissolution and disgrace for losing in international competition to the team of a country ideologically at odds with the Soviet Union—as happened to the Soviet Army's champion soccer team after it had gone down to defeat at the hands of the Yugoslav team in the 1952 Olympic games.[13]

In Soviet life generally, there has been an effort under Khrushchev to make the system work more efficiently by substituting incentives and persuasion for arbitrary compulsion, and by constricting an overgrown, cumbersome bureaucracy. The change in sports administration undoubtedly is part of this effort. Meetings of the USSO Central Council and of the directing organs of the various national sports federations are now being held on a regular basis, and their actions are being duly publicized in the press. Similar meetings are presumably being held by the USSO councils at the republic and lower levels. Even though restricted in their freedom of discussion and subject to ever-present party control, these meetings will undoubtedly afford some outlet for the airing of grievances and criticisms of arbitrary acts—if only because the party recognizes the value of limited criticism as a means of keeping the leadership on its toes. This may well have been the thought in the mind of the new head of USSO, Romanov, when he stated at the first All-Union Conference:

There is no doubt that initiative from below will raise many new and interesting questions, and will help in furthering greater responsibility for the development of physical culture and sport.[14]

In sum, the underlying purpose of the public organizations is to infuse what has been termed "controlled vitality" into the Soviet system. By stimulating greater public participation, the party leaders hope to achieve not only more popular but more efficient administration, without any sacrifice of party control. The possibility remains, however, that even a controlled change may produce unexpected results.

Henry W. Morton

(Mr. Morton, an instructor at Queens College, New York City, has written extensively on the role and organization of sport in the Soviet Union. He observed the subject at first hand during a visit to the USSR in the summer of 1959.)

[13] The dissolution of the Soviet team was not reported in the press, and the team itself was never again mentioned in *Sovetskii sport.* The case was mentioned by the former Soviet citizen, Yuri Rastvorov, after he sought asylum in the United States. See "Red Amateurs are Pros," *Life,* Vol. XXXVIII, No. 23 (June 6, 1955), pp. 97-98.

[14] *Sovetskii sport,* February 27, 1959.

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Due to circumstances beyond our control, the current issue of Problems of Communism *appears three weeks late. Our apologies—and assurance that we will be back on schedule with the January-February issue.*

—The Editors

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Correspondence

EDITORS' NOTE: Readers are welcome to send communications dealing with matters discussed in *Problems* of *Communism.* Comments should be addressed to the Editors, *Problems of Communism,* U.S. Information Agency, 1776 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington 25, D. C.

THE COLD WAR

TO THE EDITORS: Although it is not my habit to write letters to the editor, either in praise or otherwise, I have decided that Alfred G. Meyer's Review of *Protracted Conflict* (July-August 1960) is too scandalous an event to be accepted in silence. . . .

It so happens that I agree with a number of points Mr. Meyer made in his review. I have no use for the concept of the "systemic revolution," which I consider a not altogether harmless piece of historicist determinism. I take serious issue with *Protracted Conflict* for dealing with communism as if it were nothing but a power technique, and for leaving out the ideological dimension altogether.

Nevertheless, when one has made all the critical objections one cares to make, the fact remains that this is the first systematic book produced on the Cold War and a most valuable guide to orientation and policy making in our time. No matter how much one would disagree with this or that point of commission or omission, under no circumstances did the book warrant the kind of vicious attack that A. G. Meyer wrote for you. . . . Your magazine is widely read throughout the free world. It is a magazine which addresses itself as much to readers abroad as to readers at home. I cannot understand, then, how you can carry this kind of review which reads like a declaration of irreconcilable war on precisely those people here who are most seriously and responsibly concerned with the security of the United States and the defense of the free world.

If I may borrow a term from Stalin, there is such a thing as "style in work," which calls for the general character of work to fit the general character of the undertaking of which it is a part. Mr. Meyer may be able to defend himself by points, but the general character of his article is that of bitter hostility to a book that has made an important contribution to the cause of the free world. Such a piece should not be allowed to disgrace the pages of your otherwise highly respected magazine.

GERHART NIEMEYER
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana

TO THE EDITORS: Alfred G. Meyer's review of *Protracted Conflict* was not only unfair, but had all the earmarks of a hasty and angry job. I have reviewed the book myself on several occasions, and have read it through carefully several times. I must say that Mr. Meyer's version of the book bears little relevance to fact. The best proof of this is that every review that I have read—in leading journals here and abroad—has praised the book and the insight of its authors. The comparison between these reviews and that of Mr. Meyer is quite revealing. Everybody seems to be out of step except Mr. Meyer.

The fact that Mr. Meyer is more sanguine about Soviet intentions than Professors Strausz-Hupé, Kintner, Cottrell and Daugherty is beside the point. What is truly illiberal is for the reviewer to state flatly that he is right and they are wrong ("remarkably naive and simplistic"). Let the future decide. Personally, his review reminds me of those Britishers who in 1938 ridiculed Winston Churchill for taking the Nazi threat seriously.

ANTHONY T. BOUSCAREN
Le Moyne College
Syracuse, N. Y.

MR. MEYER REPLIES: Professor Bouscaren is jumping to conclusions. If I regard the conspiratorial views of Messrs. Strausz-Hupé *et al.* as naive and simplistic, that does not mean I underestimate the precariousness of the Western position in world affairs. But I disagree with them over the nature of the threat, and I am convinced that they do great damage to the West by perpetuating naive, simplistic, and self-congratulatory views that distort reality and prevent a sane orientation in a revolutionary world. Again, whether I am "more sanguine about Soviet intentions" than the authors of *Protracted Conflict* is entirely irrelevant. What matters is not what the Kremlin wishes to do but what they are capable of doing and how their capabilities and actions are related to broader international developments.

The sharp tone of my review which has disturbed Professor Niemeyer reflects not only my alarm over the persistence of views which I consider harmful, but also

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my distaste for the authors' obvious intolerance and dogmatism. Just as Professor Bouscaren counters my criticism by implying that I am "soft on communism," so the authors of *Protracted Conflict* seem to be implying throughout their book that whoever disagrees with them is an *"ad hoc* proxy" of communism, *i.e.,* one who consciously or not (the Communists would say "objectively"), aids the Communist cause. For this reason, I can only reply to Professor Niemeyer that I dislike their style as much as he dislikes mine.

COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP

TO THE EDITORS: Donald W. Treadgold, in his review "Reportage—or Wishful Thinking?" (September-October 1960), reaches a new height in professorial pomposity. He is especially contemptuous of the theory that in 1960 Mr. Khrushchev's freedom of action was seriously circumscribed by other Soviet leaders. It is obvious that Mr. Treadgold is ignorant of the fact that leading CPSU publications have since the spring of 1960 (*i.e.,* the time when Khrushchev's Secretariat in the CPSU Central Committee was depleted) quoted Lenin to the effect that "only collegial decisions of the Central Committee, adopted in the Orgburo or Politburo or at a plenary session of the CC, those and only those decisions are implemented by the Secretary of the party's CC. Otherwise the work of the CC could not proceed properly." Is this not sufficiently indicative of what Mr. Treadgold refers to contemptuously as "the chaining of Nikita?"

To put it in a nutshell: If Mr. Treadgold is not *au courant* of current-day political developments in the Soviet Union, why does he offer to comment on pertinent Western literature? . . .

JAMES BIDDLEFORD
Washington, D. C.

MR. TREADGOLD REPLIES: The single quotation cited by Mr. Biddleford is unlikely to convince anyone of anything; in any case this is not the place to marshal the evidence. The important point is that I did not deny the possibility that "Khrushchev's freedom of action was seriously circumscribed by other Soviet leaders." Instead, I referred to Mr. Salisbury's contention that Khrushchev's decisions regarding the summit conference were determined by the "army", the "Stalinists", and the "Chinese". Making no effort to set forth the evidence bearing on that contention, I cited Professor Dallin's and Mr. Lowenthal's articles in which this is done, and on the basis of which the authors reach a conclusion to which I adhere. Mr. Biddleford ought to have credited the phrase "the chaining of Nikita" to Mr. Dallin, not to me, although I would have been happy to have coined it. There is some difference of opinion among competent observers as to the extent to which a struggle within the leadership of the *party organization* is to be regarded as a factor of continuing importance, although it appears to me that Khrushchev's position is firm. However, the question whether Khrushchev's power is subject to interest groups outside the party organization is quite a different one.

Of course, it may be contended that the term "Stalinists" refers to a section of the party leadership. I regard the manner in which this term has usually been employed as misleading, since it implies that Khrushchev was not and is not a "Stalinist" in the sense of having followed Stalin loyally during the dictator's lifetime and adhering to his basic doctrines since his death. I find this term of no more use in differentiating between Khrushchev and his competitors than was the term "Leninists" in distinguishing Stalin's men from his opponents in the 1920's. There are many differences between the 1920's and the present moment, but in neither case are the main issues to be identified with the position of the dead leader. If Mr. Biddleford possesses a list of "Stalinists," however, I hope he will make it public without delay.

US-USSR COMPETITION

TO THE EDITORS: One can fully agree with the opinion expressed by Mr. Marshall I. Goldman in his excellent article about Soviet living standards and consumer goods, (September-October 1960), namely, that the chance of the USSR's catching up with the United States in stocks of durable consumer goods is remote within the present generation. Considerably less convincing is Mr. Goldman's conclusion that the Soviets "are seriously determined to match" the United States in its standard of living.

One reason for overestimating the real eagerness of Soviet rulers in this direction appears to be an erroneous interpretation of the October 1959 decision of the Central Committee of the CPSU to increase the production of some consumer goods.

This decision, published in *Pravda* of October 16, 1959 (and not October 28, 1959, as footnote No. 16 to Mr. Goldman's article mistakenly states), indicated the intention to increase the production of some categories of consumer goods, overwhelmingly consumer durables, in the years 1959-1961, by 42 percent as compared with 1958. In that year the total wholesale value of these goods constituted only 6.8 percent of total retail sales. Therefore, it cannot be said that the planned 7 percent annual increase in retail sales of all consumer goods foreseen in the original Seven-Year Plan had been replaced, for the years 1959-1961, by an annual increase of 12 percent, as the article clearly maintains. In fact, as respective calculations prove, the implementation of the Central Committee's professed intention to increase output (and sales) of consumer goods would have resulted not in a 5 (12 minus 7) percent additional annual increase in all retail sales, but in an increase of only about 0.3 percent.

Of special interest is the extent to which the consumer goods industry has been able to execute in practice the

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decision to increase the output of consumer durables, which was ordered to begin already in the fourth quarter of 1959.

Respective computations indicate that production of the ten more important consumer durables (watches, cameras, radios, television sets, refrigerators, washing machines, sewing machines, motorcycles and motorollers, bicycles and furniture), which include 70 percent of the 1958 production of consumer goods indicated in the decision of the Central Committee, increased during the three years 1957-1959 by 30.7 percent in comparable prices, indicating an annual increase of 9.4 percent.

During the first half of 1960, when the increased production of consumer durables was supposed to be in full swing, the output of the same ten products increased, as compared with the first half of 1959, by 9.1 percent. (Prices used: retail prices indicated in the June 1960 official announcement of the state "Money and Things Lottery" of the Estonian SSR. Quantities used: quantities indicated in the annual and semi-annual statements of the Central Statistical Administration regarding the execution of plans, as published in *Pravda.*)

It appears, thus, that the declaration of the Central Committee about a considerable increase in production of consumer durables (which, at the time of its publication in October 1959, seemed to make a strong impression in the United States because of an erroneous understanding identical to that of Mr. Goldman) has resulted, for the time being, not in a large increase, but in a small decrease in the growth rate of output of these goods.

This discrepancy between the implication of the declaration of the Central Committee and the ensuing practical results, as well as many other similar cases, implies that the determination of the Soviet rulers to match the United States living standard is often limited to the wish to do so, without any additional appropriation of materials and labor for this purpose.

ALEKSANDER KUTT
Chairman, Economic Committee,
Assembly of Captive European Nations,
New York City.

MR. GOLDMAN REPLIES: Mr. Kutt's comments are not without merit. In his third paragraph, he calls attention to some statements of mine about the October 19, 1959, decree of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers which established higher rates of growth for certain consumer goods. Mr. Kutt feels I have overemphasized the effect of this decree. This misunderstanding arises because of the wording used in my article. Mr. Kutt interpreted my position to be that "the planned 7 percent annual increase in retail sales of *all* (I have added the emphasis to his statement) consumer goods foreseen in the original Seven-Year Plan had been replaced for the years 1959-1961 by an annual increase of 12 percent." Perhaps this confusion would have been avoided if I had inserted the word "certain" in my second sentence on page 36 of the article. My original statement would then read, "However, in October 1959, less than a year after the announcement of the Seven-Year Plan targets, the Soviet government called for a much greater expansion in the production of *certain* consumer goods." In any case, I did not mean to imply that the 12 percent increase was to be applied to "all" consumer goods. It should be noted, however, that the word "all" was inserted by Mr. Kutt to prove his point.

If one is to talk about the effect of the increased production of these "certain" goods on total retail sales, there appears to be a greater increase in overall sales than the 0.3 percent estimated by Mr. Kutt. There are at least three possible errors in his estimate. In making his calculations, he has apparently combined wholesale prices and retail prices without any adjustment; he has estimated the percentage of total retail sales made up by these "certain" goods in terms of 1958 sales, when they constituted the smallest percentage of total retail sales; and, he has neglected the series of price reductions on many of the affected goods which have been made since 1958. All of these factors understate the effect of the increase in production of these "certain" goods and suggest that the total sales volume has increased by more than the 0.3 percent conceded by Mr. Kutt.

As for the issues raised by Mr. Kutt in his last few paragraphs, I do not see any basis for criticism. A major argument in my article was that it did not seem likely that the revised October 1959 goals would be fulfilled (p. 38). Consequently, I fail to comprehend my "erroneous understanding" of the significance of this decree. I have also pointed out, in footnote 12, p. 35, and in a forthcoming article, "Market Research for Consumer Goods in the United States and the Soviet Union: Some Growing Similarities" (which will appear in a collection of essays to be published by the French Chamber of Commerce under the editorship of S. Wickham), that sales and even production of certain durable consumer goods have fallen. In the index Mr. Kutt has compiled to demonstrate this, however, he has allowed the trees to hide the forest when he says that it indicates that no real effort is being made to improve living conditions. The reason that output of such items as watches, rifles, bicycles, motorcycles and motorscooters, and even radio has fallen is not that the government is unconcerned about improving the standard of living, but that it finds itself overstocked with these goods. Thus, bicycle production was cut back by 500,000 units in 1960 for this reason (*Sovetskaia torgovlia,* August 20, 1960, p. 3). What is important is the rate at which output of scarce items such as refrigerators, washing machines and housing is increasing. That these items have more than compensated for the cutbacks of other items is indicated in fact by Mr. Kutt's growth rate of 9.1 percent, still an impressive figure. Such continued growth in my opinion, reflects a strong desire to improve living conditions. The decision to supplement this with an increased investment of 25 to

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30 billion rubles for the production of light industrial and food products is an instance where the state has taken additional steps to assure the increased production of consumer goods (*Pravda,* May 29, 1960, p. 2). Moreover, the decision of August 1960 to increase investment in distribution facilities by at least 13 billion rubles is an example where the state has sought to assure more efficient distribution of this increased output of goods (*Pravda,* August 9, 1960, p. 1).

The receipt of Mr. Kutt's comments has placed me in a perplexing situation. He is not the only one to criticize this article. In a four column attack in the September 15, 1960, issue of *Sovetskaia torgovlia,* V. Malykhin and Ia. Orlov take me to task for being a bourgeois apologist and for not acknowledging Soviet accomplishments. It's nice to find oneself in the middle. I agree with Mr. Kutt that it is bad to overstate Soviet accomplishments, and I also agree with Messrs. Malykhin and Orlov that it is equally bad to understate them. I believe I have observed both injunctions in my article. It seems to me that the Russians are making a determined effort to overtake our standard of living, but considering the present state of their economy and the problems discussed in the article, "the possibility of the Russians catching up within the present generation seems very remote indeed."

SINO-SOVIET "DIVERGENT UNITY"

TO THE EDITORS: I found the article "Pattern and Limits of the Sino-Soviet Dispute" by Zbigniew Brzezinski (September-October 1960) to be one of the clearest and most detailed studies that I have read. As I was reading, it occurred to me that the Chinese seem to be doing to the Soviet Union just what the Soviets are trying to do to the Western powers—that is, putting them on the defensive. Perhaps this explains—at least in part—the action of Khrushchev during recent months.

However, the question now arises: Is it possible for the two major Communist countries to develop and prosper within "divergent unity" in much the same manner as the Western powers have done—irrespective of the differences between them—or is the Communist discipline so strong that ideological or strategic differences would cause a serious upheaval within the Communist community?

Perhaps, as this divergence persists and no steps are taken to mend the schism, it will grow and fester under a facade of unity until some day the alliance collapses as its underpinning is eaten away. . . .

JAMES RIDDERVALD
Derry, New Hampshire

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